

Christian Courier

A REFORMED WEEKLY

OCTOBER 6, 1995/No. 2459

50th Anniversary Issue



Formerly known as Calvinist Contact
Founded in 1945

memories

EDITORIALS

Christian Courier

CHURCH MATTERS

1995

A REFORMED WEEKLY

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The Canadian
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Breaking the ties of the past,
Bidding their loved ones adieu,
Westward with faces set,
Life is to start anew.

Canada beckons them on,
Others have gone before;
Hastily all packed,
Bound for the shore.

Swing on Atlantic is
Mixture of joy and
Seasickness, storm endured.
All the while

Church press

Cultivating spiritual
habits

Thank you, God, thank you, Canadians, thank
Allied soldiers for the liberation of 1945

Reformed vision

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IXVLL

A brief history of a paper affectionately called CC

We told a rather detailed story of how CC was started and maintained in the 40th anniversary issue of our paper 10 years ago. In this issue we will be much more brief, hoping that readers have saved their 40th anniversary issue.

Bert Witvoet

The first CC printed in August 1945, is written entirely in English and is aimed at first and second generation Dutch-Canadians whose parents and grandparents have come to Canada during the first two decades of the century. The paper is called *The Canadian Calvinist* and is published out of Edmonton, where its first editor, Paul De Koekkoek, is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church. It is a monthly news sheet intended to bring contact between Christian Reformed churches and groups in Canada.

In August 1949, a second paper, called *Contact*, is started in Ontario. By this time the post-World-War-II immigration from the Netherlands has begun in earnest, and the Christian Reformed Immigration Societies of Eastern Canada have decided that a Dutch tabloid is needed to keep contact between Christian Reformed immigrants.

Eventually, the two papers merge. At the time of union, the *Contact* has 2,900 subscribers; *The Canadian Calvinist*, 400.

A hyphenated paper

October 15 marks the first combined issue of the *Canadian Calvinist* and *Contact*. From then on the paper will be known as *Calvinist-Contact*. Later on, the hyphen will be dropped. It is fairly obvious that the *Contact*, rather than having merged with the *Canadian Calvinist* has swallowed it. The paper is published from Chatham, and John Vander Vliet of Trenton is the editor. The cost of a subscription for this new bi-monthly paper is \$3.

After Vander Vliet ends his editorship in 1952, Rev. John Gritter from Aylmer, Ont., becomes interim editor from 1953 to 1954. In the Dec. 1, 1953, issue the editor points out differences he sees between Dutch ministers and American ministers. Dutch ministers bring with them insight into their own people, a strong principal approach and the experience of a rich cultural deployment of Calvinistic principles. American ministers understand the history and place of the Christian Reformed Church, are prin-

cipled but also very practical. They tend to be more overwhelmed by problems.

More professional

When John Gritter quits, a certain Ad. Otten, who lives in Toronto and has had journalistic training in the Netherlands, is appointed managing editor. He stays in this position from 1954 to 1959, and brings a greater professionalism to the paper.

The Oct. 1, 1954, issue announces that CC will become a weekly. Along with this increase in frequency comes a new look. For the first time the paper is printed on newsprint and takes on the tabloid look it still has today. The subscription fee is raised to \$4.

The Oct. 9, 1959, issue announces that editor Otten has resigned because he no longer holds to the Calvinistic principles that are required for the position he is holding. It seems that Otten has what later will be described as "a charismatic experience." It's not clear why that leads to a rejection of Calvinism. Or is that the editorial board's interpretation?

At this time Dick Farenhorst comes on the scene. Dick has been selling insurance in Hamilton, but is also managing a publishing and printing business for Bosch & Keuning (Canada). Farenhorst's editorship will last almost 17 years.

Active and passive

Farenhorst thinks highly of Abraham Kuyper's *pro rege* (for the King) stance, but throughout the years he learns to take some distance from what the various Christian organizations are doing. This is partly good journalism and partly because he fears what he considers the excesses of the neo-Kuyperians.

In CC's 40th anniversary issue, we described his editorship this way: "There are two strains running through Farenhorst's life: the Calvinian strain that seeks to capture every area of life for Christ, and the more passive, almost Anabaptist strain that seeks the way of peace and humility. The second strain seems to become

stronger in later years."

Discussions in CC during Farenhorst's years demonstrate that in the CC constituency there are two ways of understanding Christian obedience, which will surface time and again: the way of passive obedience and the way of active obedience. The one submits to injustice in the name of love; the other opposes it in the name of righteousness.

In discussions about funding for Christian schools, Dick Farenhorst argues for "active obedience." But after 1967, the year the Institute was opened, he seems to move more towards "passive obedience." Maybe it's

horst. Knight has spent seven years in journalism, working as reporter and later as city editor for the *Welland Tribune*. Actually Knight begins as managing editor while Farenhorst is still editor, but because of the latter's illness Knight takes over the editorial duties as well.

Knight decides to move the paper, which up till then has been published by Guardian Press in Hamilton, to St. Catharines. The first issue from St. Catharines, July 16, 1976, is also the issue that announces Farenhorst's death.

During Knight's editorship controversies about keeping or not keeping the Dutch in CC

hard for me to describe my own editorship, so I will quote an article written by Marian Van Til in the 40th anniversary issue.

Off-beat sense of humor

"When Bert Witvoet took on the co-editorship of *Calvinist Contact* ... his influence was quickly apparent. His headlines were bold, catchy, and periodically evidenced his off-beat sense of humor and love of puns," she wrote.

During my editorship cartoons began to appear in CC. We discontinued them later to cut back costs. I always regretted that, because to me, humor is next to godliness — a way of surrendering my life to God.

Van Til continues: "He intended to 'nurture an attitude of wanting to hold on to each other while openly discussing differences.' An important theme during his editorship would be 'the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.'"

That's true. I have always supported strategically wise and biblical action at the individual and group level, but I've also sought an emphasis on devotion and

piety. However, piety, to me, is not the same as acting holy and religious. It means being filled with reverence for God and recognizing the image of God in other people.

During my editorship, the editorial board took on a much larger role than it had previously, I believe. We were also able to strengthen the news component of CC by appointing regional reporters and by writing more news stories in-house.

Marian Van Til's position as associate editor strengthened the editorial department of the paper as well. Marian's "editorial's" you can find in her film reviews.

In 1989 we dropped the Dutch completely, which made me somewhat unpopular in places like Holland Christian

Continued on page 3...



In this photo collage, taken from the cover of CC's 40th anniversary issue, Bert Witvoet (top left), is surrounded by his predecessors (counter clockwise from left): Dick Farenhorst, John Vander Vliet, Keith Knight, Paul de Koekkoek, Ad Otten and John Gritter.

because of all the battles that play themselves out in the community and on the pages of CC. During his editorship there are controversies about Christian school support, the Institute and its plans to launch a Christian university, and the publication of the book *Out of Concern for the Church*.

In the end, Farenhorst plans a conference in St. Catharines. Forty-four leaders, mostly ministers, are invited to that meeting, which results in a unity statement that ushers in some years of peace as far as the CC constituency is concerned.

Farenhorst's editorship really ends in early 1976 when he is hospitalized for cancer. He dies on July 6, 1976, deeply mourned by many readers.

A rather youthful editor in the person of 26-year-old Keith Knight takes over from Faren-

and about whether or not Scripture allows for women to be ordained take up space in CC.

At the end of 1977, Guardian Publishing Ltd. sells its assets to K. Knight Publishing Ltd. But because of financial pressures three years later, Knight ends up sharing the ownership with local investors.

In 1982-83, Knight serves mainly as publisher, though officially also as co-editor with Bert Witvoet. Knight leaves in 1983 to take up various other journalistic challenges. He is currently the editor of the *Wallaceburg News*.

This ends the "historical" account and brings us to my years as editor of CC.

When I took over CC's editorship in 1982, I was 48 years old. I had been editor of two other publications before, so I was not new to the job. It's

...continued from page 2

Homes and the Dutch classes at Calvin College. The women-in-office debate raged on from year to year. It remains to be seen whether the decision of Synod 1995 to allow classes to open the offices of the church to women will bring some closure to those discussions.

An important breakthrough for the Christian church and the Christian press came when CC focused several articles on the abuse of women and children. It was back in 1988 when we began to allow victims to tell their stories. We have also carried discussions on abortion, euthanasia and homosexuality.

In addition, we have tried to acquaint readers with prison life and with voices from other church traditions. I personally have traveled to Libya, South Africa and Eastern Europe.

Part of my editorship has involved opening up windows so that we would not end up staring at ourselves.

While all this was going on, a significant group of people in the Christian Reformed community began to swing to the right, much like their counterparts in other communities throughout North America. This did not make it any the easier for me as editor. The emergence of the "orthodox" Christian

Renewal signalled a break in the fabric of the Christian Reformed Church.

And here we are, close to the end of the 20th century. A little bit the worse for wear and tear, but still whole and committed. I hope CC's history will go on into the next century.

I look at 'my' desk and start reminiscing

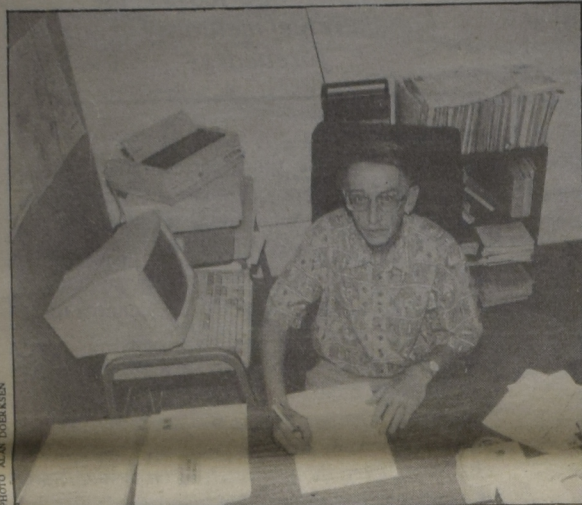


PHOTO ALAN DOERKSEN

Bert Witvoet

I was editor of *Calvinist Contact* when we celebrated our 40th anniversary. I'm editor of *Christian Courier* now that we celebrate our 50th. Same paper; different name.

No, I'm not the longest-term editor. Dick Farenhorst was in the editorial saddle for 17 years. So far my term is 13 years, but if I stay until retirement age, I will equal Farenhorst's tenure. Not that I want to pull a Call Ripken on Farenhorst (2,131 consecutive editorials and counting), but it would give me satisfaction to tie up my horse at the same watering hole that he did.

Actually, my predecessor Keith Knight and I have been sitting behind Farenhorst's original desk all these years. There's something to be said for continuity.

Six editors preceded me: Rev. Paul De Koekoek, John Vander-Vliet, Rev. John Gritter, Ad. Otten, Dick Farenhorst and Keith Knight. Of these six men, only Ad. Otten and Keith Knight are still alive today.

Dutch roots

So far all the editors, myself included, were born in the Netherlands. That was ap-

propriate since a knowledge of the Dutch language and Dutch culture remained an asset for editorship of a paper that until 1989 contained a Dutch section and that roots its worldview in Dutch Reformed soil. By now this worldview has been widely enough established in North America that a close connection with the Netherlands is no longer necessary.

Throughout the years, CC benefited from and struggled with the ethnic and denominational identity it had inherited from its immigrant founders. Dutch names predominated in the classifieds and among the contributors to the paper, and the Christian Reformed Church got a lot of attention since most subscribers adhere to that denomination. That will change as ethnic and denominational loyalties diminish.

Our prime product

It always was my hope that what really gave us identity would be our Reformed worldview — a view that says that our world belongs to God and that the best kind of development is the one that gives room for every societal institution to come into its own.

That vision has changed over

the years, of course, at least as I experienced it. It is much less theoretic and abstract today. More is being done to incorporate the personal and the experiential. We have become less triumphalistic and less judgmental. We try to avoid jargon and seek to discover new ways of connecting to a changing culture. Greater emphasis is being laid on being genuinely spiritual than on having the right opinion.

Technological change

What has changed, too, is technology. In the early days *Calvinist Contact* was typeset on a linotype, a machine that is operated like a typewriter and that casts each line of type in a piece of lead. All these lead lines had to be placed in trays that resembled a page. It was quite a labor intensive job. If you wanted to make corrections, you tried not to create extra lines or the whole shebang would have to be adjusted. The trays of type would actually end up in the press and the paper would be printed straight from that type.

Then for a while we used compugraphic typesetting machines that had a few lines of memory, and that burned the text lines into a negative that would be developed as soon as an article was finished. This process produced, what were called, "galleys," long strips of type on paper. These would be glued onto pages called flats, column by column. These flats would be sent to the printer.

Today we type everything on computer, lay out each page on computer and then produce the flats that we send to a printer. We could, of course, send all the information either by computer disk or by telephone modum to the printer, but we still prefer to produce the flats in our office so that we have a good visual idea of what a page will look like.

Keeping track of subscrip-

tions has also been computerized. In the old days, staff would maintain trays of cards, which were kept in alphabetical order. That system was not always accurate since there could be duplication. Today, the computer keeps track of payment dates, renewal times and subscription lapses and prints out labels each week according to postal code order.

Some things never change

In spite of all these changes, there are many constants in this business of running a paper. Just like Farenhorst, Marian van Til and I still depend on creative, disciplined and Spirit-filled writers to be able to produce a weekly paper that makes our readers a little richer every time the paper is popped into their mailbox.

And just like Knight, Stan de Jong sometimes lies awake at night, wondering if he can make

ends meet. And just like previous staff, Grace Bowman hates to see the subscriptions go down. Ingrid Torn can't decipher an anniversary ad with all those scribbled names and Alan Doerksen can't get a hold of a person he wants to interview while the deadline creeps up on him.

But the most constant things of all is the faithfulness of our God, who's love endures forever. Would Rev. Paul De Koekoek have dared to think in 1945 that a little paper produced on a stencil machine would still be allowed to honor God in 1995? That is not our doing. All kinds of things would have gone wrong if CC had depended on human effort. "Lord, you establish peace for us; all that we have accomplished you have done for us" (Isaiah 26: 12).

That's as sure as the desk I sit behind is sturdy.

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Editorial

Handkerchief faithfulness in kleenex times

This year, 1995, has been a flag-waving year. Fifty years ago, the Second World War came to an end. That event was celebrated by many in Europe and in North America during the month of May. But for some of us there is another reason in 1995 for waving, if not a flag, at least a handkerchief.

Fifty years ago in August, *Christian Courier* saw its birth in Edmonton under the label *Canadian Calvinist*. A handkerchief would be an appropriate symbol to wave in commemoration of that birth since the immigrants who started both the *Canadian Calvinist* in Alberta and later the *Contact* in Ontario waved many a handkerchief as they departed the shores of their little country called the Netherlands.

Handkerchief waving was more appropriate 50 years ago than it is now for a number of

reasons. First of all, waving from a boat has to communicate over a greater distance than waving from an airport gate. Secondly, many people today have exchanged the handkerchief for a package of kleenexes. Of course, both can be used to wipe away the tears that come with a departing, but does an airplane departing with the notion of being only eight hours away cause as many tears as a departure by boat that seemed so final to those leaving and those left behind? Surely, a good-sized handkerchief is needed for those many, many tears that flowed as the dune-lined shore of *ons dierbaar vaderland* became a pencil line disappearing behind the waves.

Even the walrus in the Lewis Carroll poem "The Walrus and the Carpenter" knew enough to avoid kleenexes when he said to the oysters he and the carpenter were about to eat:

"I weep for you... I deeply sympathize... holding his pocket handkerchief before his streaming eyes."

A symbol of durability

But in this seemingly insignificant exchange of material used for wiping nose and eyes we may also observe the distance that lies between 1945 and 1995.

A handkerchief is a personal possession. It might even have initials embroidered on it. A handkerchief is washable. A handkerchief is strong. It is often embellished with lines, designs or color. It can be scented with cologne or perfume. It can be made at home. It belongs to a time when durability and quality were appreciated.

We've come a long way since 1945. We live in a disposable age. Goods are disposable. Jobs are disposable. Employees are disposable. Even spouses are disposable. Did you because of a break-in at your house lose the bracelet and rings that once belonged to your grandmother? Here, have a kleenex.

Perseverance mentality

The question we have to face today is: How can *Christian Courier* survive in the age of the kleenex? I suggest to you that one of the reasons CC has existed for 50 years is because of the handkerchief mentality that our forebears had grown up with. It could be summed up in the fifth doctrine of what has been called the "TULIP" religion. I'm referring to the P in TULIP, standing for the perseverance of the saints. That's a handkerchief doctrine.

This teaching does not focus on the strength of people in and of themselves. The

perseverance of the saints is a doctrine of grace and as such it makes us totally dependent on the armor of God, so that we can stand against the devil's schemes, against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in

'One of the reasons CC has existed for 50 years is the handkerchief mentality of our forebears.'

the heavenly realms.

But at the same time, perseverance can be built into our culture, our society. Culture is the product of people who either persevere in the faith or who bow down to false idols. Consumerism is not born out of perseverance, nor does it lead to perseverance. Technocratism also is alien to perseverance. Our society is not standing against the devil's schemes; it is running with them.

So the challenge for us as saints is to persevere. And that is not an impossible challenge, even though much of modern culture is against us and against that mandate.

Strategic withdrawal

I suggest to you today that we cannot stand unless we periodically and strategically withdraw from our culture. This is not a world flight that I am advocating. But parents of children must know that they cannot submit their children to an average TV diet of 20-40 hours of television junk per week and expect those children to be able to grow up in the fear of the Lord. And young adults must know for themselves that they cannot go for the normal bar scenes and submerge themselves in the popular culture and be able to take on the full armor of God. And adults must know that they cannot allow themselves to indulge in the vacation and consumption patterns all around them and be able to fight the good fight of the faith and take hold of the eternal life to which they were called.

As a community we need time out, and we need it badly. We don't need more time than God has given us in a 24-hour day and a 70-year life span. That time is more than enough to carry out the missionary/cultural mandate of Christ. No, we need time away from idolatry and emptiness.

We need time to stop, look and listen. As a friend of mine pointed out recently, why has

Christian Courier

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*—reports on significant happenings in the Christian community and the world,
—expresses opinions that are infused by Scripture and Spirit and rooted in a Reformed perspective,
—provides opportunities for contact and discussion for the Christian community.*

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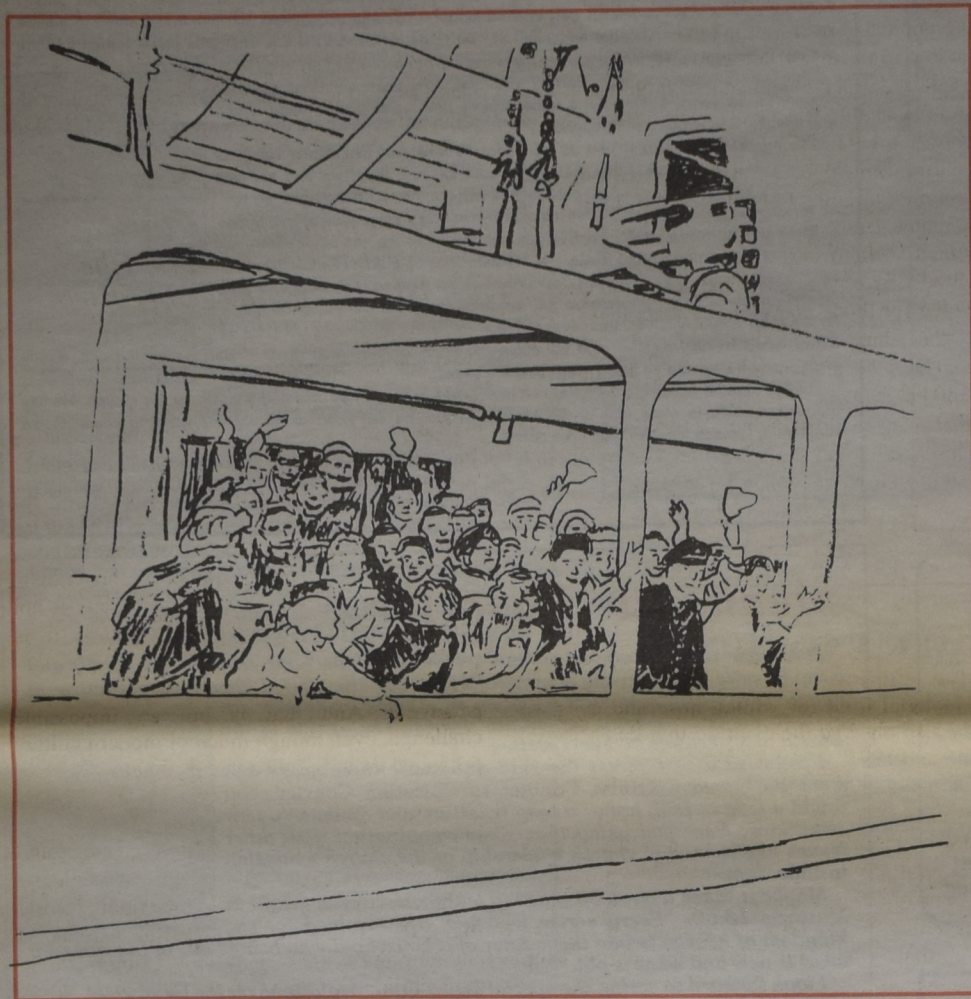
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there never been a train/bus crash in the history of Greyhound? Because the driver stops, looks and listens.

We need time to read, we need time to discuss as a community. We need time to recreate ourselves without technological gadgets. We need time to sing as families, and have devotions. We need time to be church, to be supporters of Christian organizations and the Christian school. We need time to be a neighbor.

What is the grass?

We need time to remind ourselves that our world belongs to God. "God has not left this world without ways of knowing him. He shows his power and majesty in the creation; he has mercifully spoken through prophets, history writers, poets, gospel writers and apostles — and most clearly through the Son. The Spirit who moved humans to write the Word of God speaks to us in the Bible" (From the Christian Reformed Contemporary Testimony). Are we

taking time to hear the voice of God?

In "Song of Myself," Walt Whitman gets this revelation of God right for a moment when he answers a child, who said, "What is the grass? fetching it to me with full hands./ How could I answer the child?" asks Whitman. "I do not know what it is anymore than he./ I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven./ Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,/ A scented gift and remembrancer designedly dropt,/ Bearing the owner's name someway in the corners, that we may see and remark and say Whose?"

God, the sly lover, has dropped his scented handkerchief (not a non-descript, olfactory-neutral kleenex, but an honest-to-goodness kerchief with his initials embroidered on it) in creation. And he's hoping that we might pick it up and return it to him.

The rhythm of perseverance

And this brings me to my second observation of what is needed to persevere. While we

must strategically withdraw from time to time, we must also strategically enter that culture. God's dropping of his handkerchief calls for a response, for action. We cannot persevere as saints unless we engage our culture and permeate our society with the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ.

This requires risk and expenditure. A few weeks ago a reader returned a copy of a Pentecost poem I had written in 1987 and forgotten about. In it the poet addresses the Holy Spirit as dove and as fire. The poet chooses the dove in the poem because it comforts him with its soft-feathered breast. But the fire chooses him. "Work to be done, sings my own flame, race to be run, praise to be won for Someone's name." And in the final stanza the poet prays: "O fiery Spirit/ be the power/ which I must spend/ while

*"God, the sly lover, has
dropped his scented
handkerchief with his initials
embroidered on it."*

it spends me/ to light the hour./ But when I falter/ be the dove,/ soft-feather me/ with cooing love."

This is the rhythm of the life of saints who want to return the dropped handkerchief: strategically withdraw from culture and strategically enter it; be in the world but not of it; choose the dove, and let the fire choose you.

There are many ways in which the Christian community can return the handkerchief to God. One way is to continue *Christian Courier* for another 50 years and thus to "seek to be a faithful journalistic witness of what takes place in Canadian society and the world, commenting on events from a Reformed, biblical conviction," and to encourage "thoughtful reflection on issues and events by publishing various sides of an issue, eliminating unnecessary tensions between groups and individuals, yet holding to a clear editorial line which is confessionally orthodox and culturally relevant" (From a *Calvinist Contact* mission statement).

Let us together pledge to keep the biblical voice of Reformed journalism going in Canada. That would be a wonderful perseverance of the saints in kleenex times.

God grant us such handkerchief faithfulness.

Bert Witvoet

Fellow Editors send greetings

Presbyterian Record

It's not easy surviving for 50 years — especially if you're a religious publication committed to truth and integrity. But *Christian Courier* has done it with style.

I have been reading *Calvinist Contact/Christian Courier* for many years, and not just because you have had Presbyterian columnists from time to time. I have admired your commitment to our common Reformed and Presbyterian roots and your willingness to tackle tough, uncomfortable issues.

The church will always need open and honest papers like *Christian Courier* to help build a vigorous and principled church.

As you continue your journey, may the words of our common ancestor, John Calvin, guide and inspire you: "God who has fixed the limits of our life has also entrusted us with the care of it."

From your older sibling, the *Presbyterian Record* (120 years old in 1996), happy birthday and best wishes for a long and adventurous future.

John Congram, Editor
North York, Ont.



ChristianWeek

I'm not sure how many years I've known *Christian Courier* and its forerunner *Calvinist Contact*. What I know for sure is that I've known Bert Witvoet longer. I became acquainted with him and learned to admire his work when he first took the editorship of *The Christian School Herald*. That little paper turned into the liveliest periodical for Christian schools that I have ever seen.

That was a long time ago. Bert Witvoet has now been editor of *Christian Courier* for 13 years, putting out a paper weekly and maintaining a sharp vision and keeping a vigorous pen throughout.

I've admired the *Courier* and its editor for its ability to maintain a sense of direction despite the pressures that come from left and right. He and his staff have done what few independent publications can do: they have survived. So far.

To maintain a circulation in this time of increasing fragmentation and target-publishing is no mean challenge. Even though the audience has been essentially people of Reformed backgrounds — a quite homogeneous Dutch Christian Reformed community — *Christian Courier* has faced a growing challenge to keep them as readers. Other voices have gained an ear here too. An audience with a host of voices clamouring for attention is simply harder than ever to reach.

Yet *Christian Courier* has kept an audience. Much of the credit goes to Bert's insightful and steady writing, and the people he has brought into the paper.

He has kept on building a sense of community in Christ. He has enlarged a vision for the church. He has prodded readers to more faithful discipleship. I trust he will keep on writing for years to come. God's kingdom in Canada will only gain if he does.

Harold Jantz, Editor
Winnipeg



Canadian Church Press

As you celebrate your 50th anniversary, the members of Canadian Church Press send you their heartiest congratulations and best wishes. You are a valued partner in Christian publication in this country. May God grant you many more anniversaries as you help to maintain a vital Christian presence in Canada.

Kenn Ward
President
Winnipeg

Mennonite Reporter

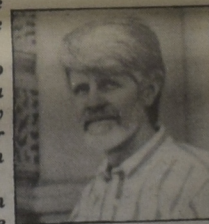
A retailer recently offered a "mature outlook" discount card for people 50 and over. Despite the blatantly commercial intent of the offer, I liked its perspective on aging. Turning 50 may have its down side: some traditions are hard to dislodge, energy sometimes wanes. The upside is the wealth of experience and perspective.

I followed with interest the shift you made three years ago from the name *Calvinist Contact* to *Christian Courier*. You found a way to both honor a long tradition and apply it to new situations. I see you using that same combination with other issues like women in church leadership or the church's mission in education.

Maybe it takes a good 50 years to learn what Jesus meant in Matthew 13:52: "Every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

I look forward to seeing the special issue. Congratulations on the milestone!

Ron Rempel, Editor
Waterloo, Ont.



The Anglican Journal

The increasing secularization of North American society has had significant impact not only upon religious institutions but upon their publications. Sadly, editorial excellence is no guarantee of longevity when denominational budgets are tight and circulations fall. Too many of us have seen companion newspapers and magazines fall by the wayside.

Therefore it is especially encouraging to see *Christian Courier* marking its 50th anniversary — a significant milestone on its journey. In 50 years we have seen enormous changes take place in our denominations, and a publication which can be as relevant to its readers in 1995 as it was in 1945 is indeed a success story.

I would like to congratulate *Christian Courier* on 50 years of bringing the faith to its readers, and hope for its continued success for the next 50 years.

Ms. Carolyn Purden
Former Editor
Toronto



The Canadian Baptist

Congratulations on the achievement of a major milestone in the life of the *Christian Courier*. We join you and your constituency in celebrating both what has been accomplished in the past and the ministry which you can anticipate through future issues.

Christian Courier and its predecessors have always maintained a very high standard of religious journalism and Christian thinking. You also do an admirable job at balancing the need to be a denominational periodical, and yet include material that's of general interest to Christians regardless of denominational background. In this era, that balance is critical and I admire the skill with which you achieve it.

On behalf of the editorial board of *The Canadian Baptist* and its denominational sponsors, the staff of *The Canadian Baptist* wishes you much pleasure and satisfaction during your actual anniversary, and years of fruitful ministry in the future.

Dr. Larry Matthews
Editor and Manager
Toronto

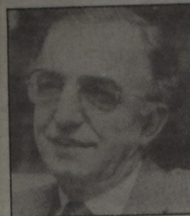


OCTOBER 6, 1995

Fellow Editors send greetings

Centraal Weekblad

As you may know I am not a subscriber to your paper, but receive it in exchange for *Centraal Weekblad*. I came in contact with *Calvinist Contact* (as it used to be named), when I was the managing editor of *Trowel and Sword*, the monthly paper of the Reformed Churches of Australia and New Zealand, and from the very start I liked it. I recognized many of the problems your readers faced in their new



country, Canada. In Australia and New Zealand we went through similar (and at times even identical) experiences.

I find it rather difficult, not to say impossible, to offer you advice for the future, as you asked. From my experience as editor I know that there is an increasing interest in human interest stories and interviews. At the same time one has to

take care that one's paper does not become too shallow and superficial.

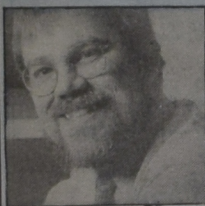
I realize that your paper is not a church paper, but has a more general character. Therefore you will need a good mix of religious, political, social and cultural articles. The last group of articles in particular is often hard to get and therefore easily neglected.

I hope that your paper may continue to be a blessing for your readers. Keep up the good work!

**Dr. Klaas Runia, Editor, and professor emeritus,
Theologische Universiteit van de
Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland
Kampen, the Neth.**

The Banner

"CC" has been a part of my life ever since I was old enough to read. The Dutch-language pages were beyond me, of course. But I read the English pages: first the ads, then the church news, and when I was older, the letters to the editor and feature articles. Somewhere along the line I came to the conviction that it must be the same with journalism as it was with everything else. Journalism could be done to the glory of God.



When you started publishing 50 years ago most Canadians probably would have described their nation and their culture as Christian. However, we now live in a largely post-Christian world. Many Canadians don't believe they're caught in the grip of sin. Most have forgotten the gospel basics. And they believe Christianity is a set of rules that tie them down.

It's a situation that begs for a Christian press. Besides keeping Christians up to date on the latest developments in the world, papers like CC can equip its readers to understand the world in biblically faithful ways. And it can encourage its readers not to give up on their remarkable, God given jobs to be ambassadors of reconciliation.

We read CC every week at The Banner. And we plan to keep on reading it for the next 50 years too. God bless you all!

**Rev. John Suk
Editor in Chief
Grand Rapids, Mich.**

Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

When a culture like Canada, with an enormous and rich Christian heritage, turns aside to allow secularity to rule, it's time for those of Christ's Kingdom to act.

From the beginning Christian Courier — beginning 50 years ago as Canadian Calvinist — has seen its role as one which rejects this ideology of secularism, asserting instead that Christ, if king at all, must be king of all.



It has taken the broader evangelical community some time to wake up to the shifting sands of our culture and realize that Kingdom blessing to a nation is not something one can assume. For when the moral and spiritual capital of a nation has been spent, it must be replenished. That's a call we of Christian faith and commitment must make.

We are all indebted to those who had vision some 50 years ago. While this paper has been very much shaped by the Dutch experience, that experience and worldview has greatly blessed our nation and specifically served to enrich the evangelical people.

May we continue to be challenged and encouraged by the continuing biblical and insightful writings of the editors and contributors to Christian Courier.

On behalf of many, many Canadians, I express my thanks to you, for your courage, vision and ongoing service.

**Dr. Brian C. Stiller
Executive Director
Markham, Ont.**

The War Cry



Congratulations as you turn 50. As brothers and sisters in Christ who have been publishing since The Salvation Army first came to Canada, we know something of your joys and sorrows, your trials and tribulation, your sense of fulfilment and wonder when a new issue is finally printed.

May God bless your ministry as you continue to reach out to others with the good news of the Gospel.

**Maj. Ed Forster
Editor-in-Chief
Toronto**

The Catholic Register

Thank you for allowing me the pleasure of congratulating you and your newspaper on a half-century of faithful service to the Lord. May you have many more years before you.

As I have discovered here at the *Catholic Register*, it is no easy task to which we in religious journalism are called. In this largely secular society in which we pursue our calling, we are the radicals, the odd ones out. Often, our words are unwelcome, even scorned by a society that has lost touch with its relationship to God.

But perhaps that is as it should be. Jesus Christ certainly didn't have it easy, so why should we?

In the face of a world that wishes to pretend God doesn't exist, it is a real blessing that people like you and your staff still exist and still try to spread the Good News. We need all the help we can get.

Over the years I have had many good friends in the Christian Reformed Church. Through long discussions we have challenged each other to a deeper faith. For a Catholic such as myself, the news and views in your publication remind me of those pleasurable talks, helping to widen my understanding of Christianity in all its forms.

May God continue to bless your efforts.



**Joseph Sinasac
Editor
Toronto**

How to
order a copy of
this historic issue of
Christian Courier

Send us \$3.00 and we will send a copy of this special 50th anniversary issue to your friend or family member. Please give us his/her name, address and postal code, and we will look after the rest.

Stan de Jong
manager

The congregations and agencies of the Christian Reformed Church extend to Christian Courier and its staff our gratitude and congratulations for 50 years of service to the cause of Christ and his kingdom. In articles and on the editorial page you have honored the Lord and loved his people. We are grateful for your partnership with us in ministry. We wish for you God's continued blessing!!



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Christian Week
salutes the work of the
Christian Courier
and its staff.

You are making a significant contribution to Christian journalism in Canada. You have shown us how to serve a faith community with solid Christian journalism, a wide vision, warm appreciation for the people for whom you write, and a deep love for the truth of the gospel.

Congratulations on reaching your 50th anniversary!

Harold Jantz, Doug Koop, Debra Fieguth, Julie Dykstra,
Bryan Rempel and Don Monkman

Christian Week

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**My
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The federal government recently introduced measures that could undo Canada's national system of health, social assistance and education programs. These changes affect us all, but the biggest losers will be the poor and the vulnerable.

**The time to speak out for a just
and compassionate Canada is now.**



For details about CPJ's
National Standards Campaign,
call 1-800-667-8046

*Congratulations to Christian Courier for 50 years
of raising issues of social concern and promoting
a vision of Christians active in all of life.*

Snapshots from the past

Lodge membership

(from the Jan. 12, 1962, Calvinist Contact issue)

Dear Sir,

I am Dutch and attend the Christian Reformed Church once in a while. A few of my friends invited me to Truro to hear Prof. Van Riessen. In many things he was wrong and I told him so, he even admitted to me afterwards. There is one thing in particular that annoys me. You Christian Reformed people seem to think that you are better than other people, and know everything. You know there is a great danger in this. My best friends agree with me that they really should go with me to the Presbyterian Church. But you teach them that Canadians are not standing up for Jesus and are not living according to the Bible. This is not right, my friends.

Now in your CC Dec. 8, Rev. Flietstra writes about the Lodge problem. What does he know about it? He writes: "One who is loyal supporter at a weekly lodge session will never bother to honour Sunday by his church attendance," etc.

Well, my good friend, I am a lodge man myself. I attend every week and I enjoy it very much. But besides I am a Presbyterian and go to church twice

every Sunday, as many of my good Canadian friends. To help you out of the dream I will write down the Qualifications Essential for Membership in our Lodge.

1) Toward God.

An applicant for admission should have a sincere love and veneration for his Heavenly Father; a steadfast faith in Jesus Christ, as the only Mediator between God and man, and a firm reliance in the guiding, witnessing and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. He should be a diligent reader of God's Word, a sincere observer of the Lord's day and a regular attendant at His House, endeavouring to bring forth the practical fruits of righteousness and obedience to God's commands as a humble and consistent servant of God

and follower of His Saviour."

I am really sorry that I have to write this but I think that you give my fellow Dutch-Canadians a false picture from this wonderful country and their people. You will probably not agree, but I think so.

A. Hooymans

Reply from the Rev. Flietstra:

Dear Mr. Hooymans:

Your letter of Dec. 12th was given to me by the editor of Calvinist-Contact. I would thank you for your courage to respond. This proves that one is open to instruction and from such reaction both of us can profitably gain more understanding of each other's viewpoints on a given issue.

First of all, I would explain

that my articles which shall appear on the lodge and lodgism are not with respect to one's church affiliation. Rather, it concerns one's personal conviction grounded in God's special revelation. Whether we be Chr. Reformed or Presbyterian or Anglican is not the basic question. Basically, it is, "Are you willing to follow Christian principles as outlined in the Bible only?"

Secondly, Mr. Hooymans, you claim that the lodge places certain basic qualifications essential for its membership.

As yet, I have not found such qualifications as you cite in the study of the Lodge system. Perhaps I have overlooked them. But, dear friend, it would give me much joy and satisfaction to have proven to me that your

lodge NOW does own Christ "as only Mediator between God and man" etc. To learn that every one who takes the oath of Entered Apprentice can see sin, salvation, and service in the light of the shed blood of this Jesus alone!

Thirdly, if this is the true and accepted Lodge confession, would you be so kind as to quote such proof for our readers of CC? Also, would you forward to the undersigned documentary proof from the ritual and ceremonies of the Lodge itself? I would be extremely delighted in receiving this new revelation of Lodgism! Thank you kindly.

Yours very truly,
C.Wm. Flietstra

Confidentially Speaking

(from the Jan. 4, 1963, Calvinist Contact issue).

Most worthy Con and Ad,

I am 17 months old and faced with a serious problem. All my girlfriends are going out (most of them steady) and I am NOT. I can't understand it. The boys

won't have anything to do with me (not that I blame them, but it isn't very nice). Is there something you can do for me? Please, tell me how I can obtain something my friends haven't got (something so new it doesn't exist yet) that will make me the centre of attraction (not that I am referring to the law of gravity, but you know what I mean).

Tearfully yours,

The little Toddler

Dear Little Toddler,

We believe that there are not many 17 months old girls faced with such a serious problem as yours! However, we assume that you have passed the diaper age and must have reached the "sweet-seventeens". We are sorry to learn that your age of seventeen years is not sweet at all, but rather sour. We would gladly help you in changing this fault, but we have no magic recipe by which you can attract boys as honey does bees. There is no such thing.

We have a different suggestion: Be yourself. Don't try to look like a famous movie star or act like an acrobat. Cultivate your pleasant qualities and overcome the others. Find out

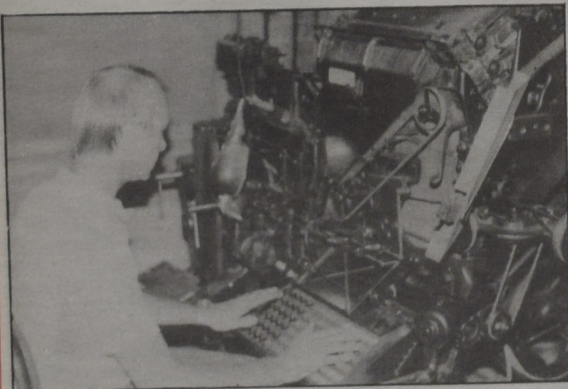
why the boys turn their backs on you. Maybe a close girlfriend or relative can help you in unveiling this mystery if you can't find the reason yourself. Are you jealous? Too anxious to make friends with the boys? Do you put too much emphasis on sex? Once you know what's wrong, it will be easier to overcome these faults. For the rest, we advise you to be kind, helpful, cooperative, understanding, patient and show interest in others (not only in boys, but in girls, children and grown-ups as well). You should realize that there are many more valuable things in life besides boys and going steady. Most boys appreciate it when they can talk with their girl about serious and important topics. Only a few prefer an empty-headed beauty queen above a plain, but pleasant and interest-

ing girl. By this we don't mean that you should neglect your appearance. Of course not. Be clean, neat and dress properly and use make-up modestly. As we have pointed out before in these columns, qualities of character count more (and attract more boys) than an overdose of make-up or some silly and striking behavior. And don't forget: You are still very young. There is still time to improve.

Con Fidential.

Ad. Niser

This is how CC was typeset in the '60s



Jerry Kool behind the linotype at Guardian Press in Hamilton, Ont.



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That was then...

Margaret Griffioen-Drenth

"Why not apply to *Calvinist Contact*?" my mother said. *Calvinist Contact* (now *Christian Courier*) was not my idea of a "real job in journalism." I knew *Macleans* was not going to hire me, but surely there was a community newspaper, preferably away from home, that would welcome my training and enthusiasm? Yeah, right!

Working on my father's farm had paid for my first two years of college. With my journalism education I was sure I would qualify for a job "in my field," pay my third year and gain valuable experience.

Calvinist Contact was not the paper I wanted to work for. I saw it as a Christian Reformed Church (CRC) publication for my parents' generation. While I was a professing member of that church, I was more active in another denomination and considering joining it.

God had other plans for me.

"There's some young guy on the phone for you," my mother said with that

"are-you-dating-someone-you-haven't-told-us-about-yet?" look on her face. It was then CC editor Keith Knight wanting to know if I was interested in being a Toronto-area correspondent for the summer. I could do good news-style reporting and try my hand at advertising sales. I had a choice: work for Dad; or



CC FILES

Margaret Griffioen "then" — while working at *Calvinist Contact*

stay in Toronto and work for CC. All the other publications I had applied to did not seem to value my qualifications the way I thought they would!

Working for CC turned out to be a wonderful experience. Little did I know that I would be associated with the paper in various capacities for the next 13 years.

Christian communal spirit

The summer of 1982 provided me with an opportunity to meet the people behind many organizations which I had heard of, but did not really know much about: the Christian Labour Association (CLAC), the Institute for Christian

Studies (ICS), Christian Stewardship Services (CSS), and others. I also met Christians from all walks of life: artists, actors, chaplains, police officers, teachers, counsellors and more.

I virtually ate my way through interviews. Everyone was so friendly that I was taken to lunch almost once a week by one interviewee or another. Rev. Jac Geuzebroek (then Toronto hospital chaplain) made sure I learned where to get Dutch cuisine; Harry Houtman of Christian Stewardship Services introduced me to the ICS crowd and a few of us went out for Israeli food; and artist Matt Cupido took me out for the best shiskabobs in Toronto's Greek area.

I look back amazed at the welcome and warmth people had for me, a 20-year-old inexperienced student. I praise God that my first "real job" was so positive. My attempts at ad sales were a dismal failure and I'm not sure how much my reporting did for CC. I met the people behind ministries and organizations. I saw their great desire to serve the Lord and thus to this day I can prayerfully support their work. As many of these people had Reformed vision, I also came to a greater appreciation of my heritage, and renewed my commitment to the CRC.

In 1983 I began to work full-time for *Calvinist Contact*. In the six years I was

there I went from full-time writing to doing all the layout and design of the paper, with some editorial assignments on the side. It was the staff who made my work more than a job.

The small staff made for a family atmosphere. Like a family, we shared many good times and had to struggle from time to time with problems such as personality conflicts and diverse opinions. In particular I remember when Marian Van Til joined CC. Our first impression of each other were — well, let's just say not too flattering. Yet she became, and is still, one of my closest friends. We must have driven the other staff crazy at times. We would have very heated debates concerning an article or layout. Then we'd each try to rope Editor Bert Witvoet and other staff members into taking our point of view. Just when everyone would be convinced Marian and I would never speak to each other again, 4:15 p.m. would roll around, we'd be planning where to go for coffee or dinner together that night.

My surrogate "family" used their inside knowledge of me, my resume and who knows what other resources to compose, and sing in four-part harmony no less, a song about me which left my husband Marty and other guests laughing to the point of tears and me embarrassed at my 1987 wedding reception.

...And this is now

Eventually I left for other jobs, but somehow I have not been able to totally sever ties with CC. For the second time since leaving, I am serving on the editorial advisory committee, which seeks to advise and assist the editorial staff. Each month we meet to review CC and discuss ways to improve it. We struggle over how to increase subscriptions. We discuss what it means to be a Reformed publication. Now we look ahead, Lord willing, to the next 50 years of CC.

Since Marty and I are now right in the middle of raising two children I can't help but compare my thoughts on CC to that of a family. Like parents, I think we have goals and/or a vision from which we will not waiver. Christian parents strive to follow God's will and bring up their children in a saving knowledge of the Lord. CC desires to do God's will in providing news, information and analysis and believes it should be done from a Reformed perspective.

Like a family, just when you think you've figured out how to do your task and that you're on the right track, you enter a new phase of development and the world around you changes. While the ultimate goal remains intact, the ways and means of achieving it need to be reassessed and, very often, changed.

The Reformed community seems so divided and there are a number of periodicals and newspapers catering to specific segments of that community. Can CC remain a "general interest" publication or should it narrow its focus to one Reformed denomination? Should CC try to attract the 20- and 30-year-olds or the 40- and 50-plus crowd? Or all of them? Should CC remain a newspaper or change format and become a magazine? Or set up on the World Wide Web and forget about paper altogether?

Do I have answers? No! I believe, however, that if it is the Lord's will that *Christian Courier* continues its ministry, the answers to these concerns lie with our readers and the broader Christian and Reformed communities. Only in close dialogue with each other will we be able to serve each other. Kind of like a family!

So I challenge the readers of CC to write us and share ideas you have for CC. I urge you to share your copies with others and encourage them to join the CC "family" and this dialogue. Most of all, I ask you to pray for this ministry and its staff.

Margaret Griffioen-Drenth is a freelance writer who lives in Burlington, Ont., with her husband, Marty, and two sons, Derek and David.



COURTESY MARGARET GRIFFIOEN-DRENTH

Margaret Griffioen-Drenth today with husband, Marty, and sons Derek and David

CC and Me

Dennis VanStaalduinen

Can I make a confession?
I still call it *Calvinist Contact*.

Yes, even though I write for the paper occasionally and am a member of the Editorial Advisory Committee, not to mention the Anniversary Committee, I still sometimes find myself at Sunday coffee referring a friend to "that article in *Calvinist Contact*."

Does that seem strange — that a 26-year-old would have a problem adapting to a new name for an old paper? It does to me. I mean, it's one thing for an older person who has read all 50 years of the CC to resist change, but me? And believe

The face in the photo...

Last year, while digging through a dusty collection of old CCs in the Redeemer College library, I was wondering what has kept this paper going all these years. It has never been a slick publication; it has always been a little too folksy for mass consumption, always looking a little bit behind the times. It was mostly Dutch until 1969 and has been all-English for only six years — surely not a recipe for mass popularity.

But while flipping through one of the issues from the '60s, I came across an ad announcing the birth of a friend from Ottawa. And as I looked further back I saw more names I recog-

tear threatening to break over my lower eyelid that afternoon in the library — heck, it was only me; I was touched that somebody cared enough to announce me when I couldn't announce myself (at least not in any articulate way). I remain deeply grateful that there was also someone around to print that announcement.

I won't make too much of that connection: CC didn't give birth to me. Nor can I pretend that this bit of newsprint was equal to my baptism as a covenantal event. For, after all, the print medium doesn't make events. But it can extend them. That public notice was an extension of my baptism, stretching the knowledge and significance of that event beyond my family, even beyond my local congregation into the broader Reformed community.

Yes, CC is a public bulletin board that allows people who care about each other to find out what's happening. But more than that: CC reaffirms and reinforces the very things it "broadcasts." Our rites of passage — birth and baptisms, engagements and weddings, birthdays and anniversaries, funerals and memorials — belong to a community as much as to their participants, and so become more meaningful with their communication. With the help of a diligent courier, all of these become a fuller part of our communal history.

That is one good reason we have and will always need CC. The paper is all about our community's continuity with the past and its continued health in the future. No matter what you call it, CC is here to stay.

So from this member of the CC natal class of '69: God bless the next 50 years of *Calvinist Contact*... I mean *Christian Courier*.

In His goodness, God has given us a son

DENNIS' JOHN

born in Ottawa 3 September, 1969.

A brother for Kirsten.

Bill and Grace van
Staalduinen (née Vriend).

% Visa Office,
Canadian Embassy,
F.O. Box 323,
6 Cologne 10, Germany.



Dennis as a baby

Dennis's birth notice in CC

me, I've tried to change: I've repeated the new name to myself over and over again. I certainly can't deny CC the right to change with the times; more power to 'em! I've even come up with the halfway position of calling it "CC" so I won't get caught. I know better than to try to fix something in my mind as static and unchanging, or to cast a misty eye back to the "good old days." But there you have it.

To me, the paper I read with interest every week is the same one I've grown up with; the paper that has been helping to build the community that supports me will always be *Calvinist Contact* — one and the same as the paper that sat in a pile under a coffee table in my grandparents' house. Part of me will always be unable to see it as "Christian Courier" or anything else.

Part of CC, namely its community-building function, is a constant in the Reformed community, so it takes an effort to let my perceptions of it "catch up" to what it has become as it has matured with that community.

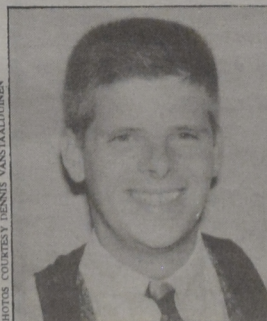
nized; an elder from church; a couple of my older cousins; one of my grade school teachers. There were weddings of couples I know. There were the funerals of older people with familiar names.

Then it occurred to me; maybe I was in there somewhere.

Suddenly I was looking for myself in CC with a feeling like someone looking for his face in a large group photo. Where was I? Where did I fit in to the context of this picture? And what if I wasn't there? I couldn't find myself in the three issues following my birthday, even though I did see announcements for two friends who were born on the same day. I began to panic.

But there I was in the fourth issue: my birth announcement from September 1969 was there on the page. There, on yellowing newsprint in a humble little ad at the back of CC was a public notice that my parents had posted for me.

I was really quite moved by that ink on paper, much more than I thought I would be. And it wasn't the historical significance of the event that had a



Dennis VanStaalduinen today

Squeezing the last drop out of CC



COURTESY JACKIE VANDEPUTTE

Jackie VandePutte of Brantford, Ont., likes to reread older issues of *Christian Courier* while milking the goat. It seems that our paper serves a dual function at the VanderPuttes: it enriches the mind of the milker and allows the goat to enrich CC from time to time. So far none of its droppings have found their way into CC's editorials, however.

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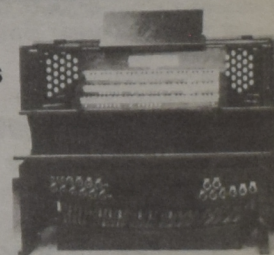
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THE BANNER

The weekly magazine of the Christian Reformed Church congratulates the *Christian Courier* on the 50th anniversary of its founding. *Christian Courier's* pursuit of faithful journalism in Canada has been a wonderful reminder to all of us that our world really does belong to God.

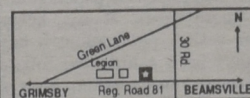
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A surprising career move

Marian Van Til

God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform.

That opening line from William Cowper's poem (first set to music in the 1615 Scottish Psalter) is probably quoted and sung so often because so many people experience it to be true.

I have found it has applied to many of God's dealings in my life, but perhaps none more than in how I came to work at *Calvinist Contact/Christian Courier*.

As long as I can remember I planned to have a career in music; music runs in the Van Til genes. I heard good music literally from the day I was born, both on our old Zenith FM radio (no TV in our house) and being made in our own living room: with voices, piano, trumpet, sax, clarinet. Listening to and making music was like ingesting food to me, and I love to eat.

So in college I majored in music, and when a music teaching job suddenly arose in St. Catharines, Ontario, just as I was about to graduate in the middle of an academic year, I emigrated from the Chicago



Marian Van Til during her early years at CC

area to take the job. (I found out pretty quickly that the position had been vacated by a college classmate of mine who had had a nervous breakdown while trying to do the job. One would think that would have given me pause, but the idealism of youth won out.)

Optimistically I moved, alone, into what was then a tightly knit community of Dutch immigrant families which was not very open to newcomers. Through many tears, much agonized prayer,

sheer force of will and the beginnings of a stress-related chronic illness, I lasted six years in those schools.

Though by then I had severe second thoughts about teaching high school, my main goal had always been university work. So I entered graduate school to focus on music history. I decided to pursue library science as well, with an emphasis on music and other academic libraries. I thought I would eventually get a doctorate in musicology and teach and do research full time.

God had other ideas.

An unforeseen opportunity

When I had finished my master's degrees I was barely supporting myself by teaching piano and organ, and as a church organist/choir director. I was somewhat ill at the same time with Crohn's disease and lacked the stamina to work a 40-hour-a-week job. So I asked myself: What can I do to make a few more dollars, something I'm good at and know about?

That's when I walked the

half-kilometer from my house to the Calvinist Contact office on Niagara Street to offer my services as a writer: I could write a music and worship column, perhaps.

Bert Witvoet invited me into the office he shared with my friend Ellen Zwart, who was an editorial assistant then.

I presented my proposal. Ellen went to bat for me, assuring Bert I could write. And, oh, by the way, said Ellen, Marian's a movie aficionada; we've been wanting to review films — maybe she could do that.

Good idea, said Bert.

Yes, I'd be happy to do that, said I.

In the next minute Ellen was telling me she would be quitting her CC job shortly (which I hadn't known) and Bert was asking: Would you like to replace her? Could you work a couple of days a week as an editorial assistant?

I left the office grinning from ear to ear, fairly skipping down the street while I thanked God over and over for dropping this opportunity into my lap; for making Bert willing to take a chance on me; for positioning

Ellen there to put in a word for me. It was May 1984.

A place and calling

My early years with CC were sometimes tough. Bert and I had our periodic differences, sometimes serious differences, and there was other occasional turmoil at the office. But as I moved from part-time editorial assistant to full-time associate editor, times and all of us changed. Other employees came and went and subscriptions ebbed and flowed, while Bert, business manager Stan de Jong, circulation and mailing expert Grace Bowman, and I, hung in there.

A year ago my husband and I started feeling like maybe there was some other future for us. We prayed diligently about it, and we each began to look for other jobs. But the answer we felt not long ago was, for now: I still have a place and calling for you where you are.

It's nice to go to work each day and feel like you belong there; but even better, that God placed you there so that you can serve him in sometimes unexpected ways.

A community of women



Alyce Oosterhuis

My mother was a conscientious and house-proud homemaker. She was also deeply committed to the homemaker's routine: on Mondays you wash; on Tuesdays you iron; on Wednesdays you mend; on Thursdays and Fridays you clean; on Saturdays you bake and cook; and on Sundays you rest.

To make ends meet in her young immigrant family she took in boarders — until her oldest daughter became too old to have young men around the house. And when her youngest

child started school, she found that the daily routines became too stifling and lonely.

She had always been a gregarious woman who loved to visit friends and be involved in the lives of others. Many visitors to First Christian Reformed Church in Hamilton, Ont., in the '50s will recall being invited to our house for coffee and dinner after my mother had spotted "strangers" in the church. She always had enough energy to peel the extra potatoes and expand the planned desserts and soups to accommodate a few more people.

Thus it was not surprising when the editor-in-chief of Guardian Publishing (now CC) appealed to my mother and five other middle-aged women to do what their machines were not able to do.

'Mindless' work allows thoughtful conversation

So from about 1955 to 1958 my mother worked every Tues-

day at Guardian Publishing, inserting the middle page of the weekly *Calvinist Contact* edition. I can imagine those women standing around the tables, mindlessly and mechanically inserting pages while their thoughts and conversations swirled around immigration and "women's issues": loneliness, language barriers, children growing up away from extended families, weddings, anniversaries, pregnancies and miscarriages in the church community, marital breakdowns, the cost of Christian education, the fear of losing a husband in an accident or illness. My mother thrived on those Tuesdays away from her ironing and daily routines and she would never miss a day of work if she could help it. The ironing was now done on Tuesday evenings.

The last Tuesday she prepared to go was sometime in February of 1958. She was putting on her hat (no self-respecting woman would venture outside without a hat in those



Alyce's mother

days) before heading out to catch the bus downtown and then transfer to the east end where Guardian Publishing was located, when she felt a searing headache and a wave of nausea.

Conscientious to a fault

She passed out in the bedroom and came to with the thought: "I promised to leave the front door unlocked so that the baker could bring the cake

and goodies for that church event tonight." Crawling down the stairs, she unlocked the door and went back upstairs to clean up her mess and rest awhile before heading out. Then weeks later she was finally allowed to leave her bed, but it was a year before specialists diagnosed that she had had a stroke.

After her final stroke and death three years later, we found stacks of baby gifts she had stockpiled with her *Calvinist Contact* money for the babies that were to be born and welcomed in the church. Her Tuesday inserting days had abruptly ended, but the involvements and friendships she forged in those years had made her an integral part of her immigrant community.

Alyce Oosterhuis teaches educational psychology at The King's University College, Edmonton, and is a regular CC columnist.

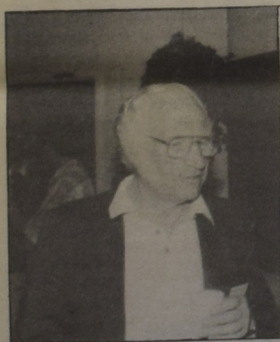
What are the challenges to the Reformed community in Canada for the next century?

Syrt Wolters, now 83 years old, has written for CC periodically for many years, including a 12-year stint as a columnist who took the name "Pensive Dutchie." Syrt has always been a thinker, staunchly Reformed, weighing everything in Scripture's light. Here he touches on themes which have always been important to him, and which he hopes are still important to the whole Reformed community.

Syrt Wolters

Shortly after we Netherlanders celebrated the liberation at the end of World War II, a massive immigration of Dutch people to Canada followed. Among those immigrants were a substantial group of devout, Reformed Christians.

Looking back it is startling that this small group of Reformed people (in comparison with other ethnic immigrant groups) have had such a profound impact on the Canadian social scene.



Syrt Wolters

Christian schools, apart from the Roman Catholic schools, were virtually unknown then. Now these Christian schools are well-established and have attracted a great number of other Christians, so that "our" schools have lost their Christian Reformed, Dutch "ghetto" stigma.

The Christian Labour Association (CLAC) has also made its mark. At first CLAC was belittled and scorned. Other angry unions tried to wipe CLAC off the map, fearing CLAC's possible impact.

Politically, again it was the Reformed Dutch immigrants, through their actions in Citizens for Public Justice, who tried, from a biblical perspective to create an awareness among Canadian Christians of our responsibility for politics.

These Reformed people even dared to tackle the tremendous task of taking the first steps

toward the establishment of a Christian university in Canada.

All this happened while these immigrants had to eke out a living in a new country.

Now, nearly 50 years later, what is the present situation? Yes, the Christian schools are alive and well, so it seems. CLAC, too, is quite regularly the focus of attention. CPJ seems very active and the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS) is still plugging away. But is there the same commitment to work for it with zeal?

The interest in Christian education is dwindling among Reformed people. If it were not for the enthusiasm and support of other Christians, the picture would not nearly be as bright. CLAC has the support of Reformed people on a very small scale. If all the Reformed Christians in Canada were to do their share, CLAC's impact would be tenfold!

CPJ, with all its activities, has not been able to give leadership to Canadian Christians in how to deal with politics. CPJ's approach has become too pragmatic; and the ICS suffers far too much from internal trouble for which the leadership does not seem to have the guts to be firm.

We could lead the way

Now the crucial question: What are the challenges of the Reformed community in Canada for the next century? Quite a question, to be frank. I would rather deal with the question: "What are the challenges of the Christian community in Canada for the next century?" The Reformed community should not isolate itself from the rest of the Body of Christ. At the same time, this Reformed community could act as the leading group among all Christians in Canada.

My answer to the question is, in a nutshell: "Live life in all its aspects, communally, on the terms of the Kingdom of Christ."

That is our challenge. It is the challenge of all Christ believers. We are still called to be a

shining light, set on a hill, to be seen by everyone! Christians must live as an identifiable unity in the world: IN the world but not OF the world. In short: be in the world on the terms of the Kingdom and not on the terms of Canadian secular humanism.

We've gone astray

In that respect we have gone astray on a large scale. Many Christians don't see the necessity of Christian education for their children anymore. It is even remarkable that many of our graduates do not continue their education at Christian institutes of learning; they enroll in secular universities seemingly without giving it much

thought. Then I ask: Have Christian high schools had any impact?

In the world of labor we join, without any scruples, secular unions which don't give a hoot about Christ's kingship. And politically we have almost entirely succumbed to secularism. Even Reformed Christians support, join, vote and even run for office for any of the existing political parties, none of which approaches politics from a biblical perspective, from the view of Christ's Kingdom. If the Christian community in general, and the Reformed community in particular, will ever have any lasting, positive impact on the Canadian scene, it must go back to the basics of

the Christian faith — child-like faith, cost what it may.

If we live such faith we have the promise and the blessing of Jesus himself: "Blessed are you when you are boycotted, slandered, persecuted, yes, even killed for my name's sake. Rejoice, because your reward will be great!"

It is one thing to confess that Christ has been given all authority in heaven and on earth, but to live it, as obedient citizens of that Kingdom, is quite another. If these two are not in harmony, our confession is nothing but lip-service.

Syrt Wolters lives in Victoria, B.C.

The philosopher barber keeps on reading

We wondered, being old as he is, if Syrt were still reading a lot, and if so, what? You may be surprised at his answers.

What do you read? Why do you read what you read? Has your reading pattern changed over the years?

These questions were put before me by *Christian Courier*. I shall gladly oblige. For an "unlettered" person I do have a rather large library. Since I was 16 years old I have accumulated so many books that when we moved to our present residence (from where I still operate a barbershop) I was forced to use one wall in my shop for part of my library. My customers love to browse through my collection and that often sets the tone for a conversation.

Our just retired Lt. Governor, Mr. David Lam, once made the remark: "Your shop library, Mr. Wolters, makes it the most unique and most interesting barbershop I've ever seen." This "wall library" has quite a variety of books. From gardening to art to philosophy, religion, history and even wine making. Among the books I've read during the last few years are:

Multinationals and the Peaceable Kingdom, Harry Antonides.

The Phenomenon of Man, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

A Brief History of Man, Stephen W. Hawking.

Some Answers, Malcolm Muggeridge.

God in the Dock, C.S. Lewis.

Crossing the Threshold of Hope, Pope John Paul II.

The Mind of the Maker, Dorothy Sayers.

The Christian Problem, Stuart Rosenberg.

To Life: A Celebration of Jewish Being and Thinking, Rabbi Harold Kushner.

One man, One Woman, One Lifetime, Rabbi Reuven Bulka.

The Scattered Voice, James Skillen.

A Vision with a Task, Gloria Stronk.

Reformational Theology: Paradigm for Doing Dogmatics, Gordon Spykman.

Farewell, The Peaceful Kingdom, Joe C.W. Armstrong.

The last mentioned book I just started reading. It has over 700 pages so this will keep me reading for quite some time. Dr. Gordon Spykman's book *Reformational Theology: A New Paradigm for Doing Dogmatics* I had put on my "wish list" because I knew Gordon for many years and learned to love him.

My children gave me a copy on my birthday. I started reading it and ploughed through several chapters, but I cannot say that I enjoyed it as much as I had anticipated. I am not enough of a trained theologian to appreciate it sufficiently. But I will keep the book, if only for sentimental reasons, because Gordon wrote it and my

children presented it to me.

The main reason I read these kinds of books is that I want to keep up to date with contemporary thinking — perhaps a left-over from the time when I wrote a regular column in CC for nearly 12 years. To keep writing, you're forced to keep reading, or else you'll go dry.

Has my reading changed over the years? Oh, yes. In my younger years I mainly concentrated on books published from our own (Reformed) circles, in Dutch as well as English. Now I have widened my reading horizons considerably through the years, as the list above will testify. That has been much to my own benefit. I have learned a lot from writers like Stuart Fowler and Doug Blomberg of Australia; from Duncan Roper of New Zealand; from Albert Greene of the U.S. (Seattle, Washington).

Particularly I have learned and been encouraged by what I have read from Jewish writers. Boy, would our spiritual life be lifted up if we would live and experience our Lord's Day as the Jews do their Sabbath. On the other hand, their rejection of Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah has had the strange effect of more strongly confirming me in my faith.

I am profoundly grateful to God who allows me to keep an interest in many things going on in the world, in spite of being in my 80s. To him be the glory.

(formerly "Pensive Dutchie")

Dad rode his horse on faith

Dick Farenhorst, Jr.

Stamps and more stamps. Gluey envelopes and *Calvinist Contacts* all over the place. Early memories of Dad asking me to help stamp envelopes filled with *Calvinist Contacts* to mail all over Canada with deadlines of "tonight, if possible" did not initially endear me to the paper. Dad said he saw God's blessing in his work because the number of subscriptions kept increasing. I was not impressed with this particular blessing.

Upon leaving the Netherlands to come to Canada, the parting words to my dad from his father, whom he loved so deeply, were "Son, I'll miss you very much, but if you can serve the Lord in that country, I'll have peace with that." I don't know how many immigrants heard goodbye variations of this, but I do know that this

shared immigrant, "stay close to the Lord," experience was reflected in Dad's editorials and brought many letters of approval and support. I suspect that often his editorials were more spiritual exhortations or words of encouragement than probings of complex issues, at least at first.

Later there were times when there were few or no letters, something that disturbed Dad much more than angry or oppositional ones. What does this mean? Nothing disturbs people anymore? The editorials don't make people react? I'm not in touch with where people are at?

Of course, many editorials he wrote took a centrist position (at least, as I read them). But Dad did say he could always see different sides (sin as well as merit) to most positions and his integrity, as directed by God's Word and Spirit would



Dick Farenhorst, Jr.

not allow him to write otherwise. He, as much as anyone I know, tried not to let ego or self interest direct him. This centrist stand often led to charges of "Farenhorst is a fence-sitter," and frustrated many of those with more passionate viewpoints.

Dad, however, was at heart a

peacemaker and hated conflict. A steady stream of people would come to the office to tell him personally how they felt about issues and editorials, and many a debate was engaged in. But a prime objective at the end of the dialogue was to have relationships maintained or possibly restored.

Dad rode his *Calvinist Contact* horse on faith — faith that God would provide when it was on a financial shoestring year after year. However, it wasn't God providing when during this time a brewery wanted to place a big ad in the paper that would have bailed C.C. out of its financial woes.

On rare occasions, Dad's work enabled him to travel out of country. A trip to Mexico to visit Mexican Indian Christians deep in the jungle was one of those life-altering experiences we may have from time to time.

He was profoundly, deeply moved by the joyous exuberant faith of a people living in abject poverty. How a people so poor could be so rich. I think the subsequent editorials commenting on the (Dutch-Canadian) cultural life were forever seated in this Third World encounter.

Dad gave his life to God through his work at C.C. It was all-consuming. To this I respond: "Dad, I miss(ed) you very much (too many hours from home when I was growing up) but if you can serve your Lord in that (*Calvinist Contact*) country, I, too, have peace with it."

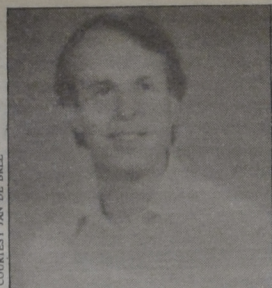
Dick Farenhorst, Jr., is a marriage and family therapist and director of Cascade Christian Counselling Association in Surrey, B.C.

CC below deck

Jan de Bree

Around the time of her birthday, Renee, my wife, praised *Christian Courier* for its variety of articles. She had received a subscription to CC as a birthday gift from her parents. When our 10-year-old son heard that comment, he complained that CC was only about religion and had no information about animals, especially lizards. His comment led me to thoughts about my upbringing and *Calvinist Contact*. My parents always read it, but as a child and an adolescent I never paid attention to *Calvinist Contact*. It moved about the house from table to table or sat in the living room magazine rack. I saw my parents read it and that was that. It was there and had nothing to do with me. CC belonged to my parents.

At the end of Grade 11 I had passed social studies and had failed everything else. I quit school after that and took a job with Pacific Water Wells, a drilling company in Nanaimo where my father worked as a welder. This company drilled domestic water wells and also did industrial drilling. In Victoria we drilled holes for the hydraulic elevators that were to slide up and down in three



Jan de Bree

storey apartment buildings. We drilled holes, lined them with pipe, and later they were filled with concrete to serve as foundations (like pilings) for buildings or wharves.

I travelled the province and lived in hotels most of the time, or in construction camps. I stayed in the Langley Hotel for a week where I slept during the day and I worked a 12-hour shift during the night.

'Still waters run deep'

In the autumn of 1965 the boss sent me to Powell River, another hotel and more 12-hour night shifts. We were soil sampling the ocean floor for the pulp mill, sub-contracting for a Vancouver engineering firm.

The drilling rig, set on the back of a truck (army surplus), stood on a barge in the bay. The barge was long and narrow and had a hole in the middle for us to run the drill bit through. The barge was self propelled and came with a skipper.

The skipper was a quiet man. He had nothing to do. Day and night he stayed on the barge. We worked. He sat around and watched. He did not even have to move the barge. We did that as well. The engineer on shore with his transit directed us to our next position while he winched in and out the anchors located on the four corners of the deck.

But I was curious. This man looked Dutch and like a true detective I wanted to find out if I was correct. I did not have to wait long. After several days he finally spoke to us and of course, he had a Dutch accent. I wanted to know more but was too shy. I could not tell him that I was Dutch as well. I just kept it a secret and hoped that he would approach me. I watched him closely.

He lived below deck in a small cabin. He never had any quiet because we worked day and night, drill bit pounding, cable slapping against the pipe,

engine running, power plant whining like a lawnmower. He had to sleep with all that noise reverberating through the walls of his cabin.

I tried to get a glimpse of his cabin, but it was difficult. The door opening was small. I saw mostly floor. I really wanted to meet him and never did. Years later there appeared a story in the *Vancouver Sun* about a marine accident on the Fraser River. A man came to the rescue and he had a Dutch name. The man worked for a company located along the river. I believe it was called Fraser River Sand and Gravel. When I read the story I speculated and thought again of our quiet, neat and clean, skipper below deck. By then I knew something about him. It was nothing he told me. It was something I had dis-

covered about him.

I never gave up peering into his cabin. One morning I kneeled to have a better view. This time I saw the table and a chair. On the table I recognized a newspaper. It was *Calvinist Contact*. I knew then that we had a lot more in common than being Dutch.

Jan de Bree is a freelance writer who lives in Duncan, B.C.

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Christian Courier

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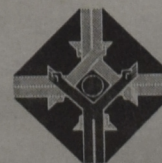
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Short Story

The mysterious disappearance of Simon du Roi



Herman de Jong

You never know what to believe when Big Josh, the police constable of Bowersville, tells a story. But when he starts to pull in his ample paunch too frequently, forget about the truth and nothing but the truth. We were having coffee together at Rosetta's Doughnut Shop, right beside the now-defunct Movie Palace on Main Street. His soprano voice squealed softly in my ear. Strange how big men often have small voices. This time I couldn't rely on his potbelly as a truth meter. I got stuck between the table's edge and the imitation red leather bench. But I tend to believe it's a true story.

First, I have to tell you a bit about Joshua Klinkhamer. He's a deacon in our church, and a good one. He knows the back streets of Bowersville as no one else does. He knows where and when people need assistance. People in our small town love their oversized constable. Couldn't do without him. In former times, after the welfare cheques had come in, there was always some commotion around the beer parlor on Saturday nights. Not anymore, no sirree! No one knows how many times Big Josh preached the same sermon to a drunk he was taking home in his cruiser.

But on with the story. Some 25 years ago Simon du Roi came to our church. With a Huguenot name like that no one doubted his Reformedness. Simon had bought the little log cabin on the dirt road to Atabaca Lake. It had stood empty for I don't know how long. Parishioners who never went swimming at the lake suddenly did so. Throwing curious glances at the little log cabin they noticed how nicely Simon had fixed things up. Women folk whispered that he might soon get married. The large vegetable garden could easily have fed a large family. But Simon remained single.

Simon du Roi would walk to church, said Big Josh. When Simon would reach the highway some parishioners would slow down to offer him a ride, but with a nervous smile he always refused. Josh remembered how, as a child, he had asked his mom why Simon's face always moved. His left cheek pulled up, making his eye go winky-winky. Mom didn't know. But his dad said, with North Netherlands shortness of words: Shell shock. Indonesia.

After church Simon did not linger for coffee and klatz. Josh remembered how this lonely man would already have turned the corner of the dirt road when their car flashed by. Church folks were somewhat shy to approach him, but it can't be said they didn't take care of him. Although he steadfastly refused support from the deacons, he readily accepted lemon and rhubarb pies which the farmers' wives handed him at the door of the cabin after Wednesday evening Ladies Society meetings. He did ask the deacons for a second-hand freezer because he couldn't possibly eat all those pies as fast as they were given to him. And so Simon du Roi remained a mystery.

In the meantime, Josh finished high school and the police academy in Aylmer and returned to Bowersville as a constable. Soon his weight was felt in the sleepy town. It wasn't his resolutely waddling buttocks which impressed the townspeople most. They loved him because he had a fine way with children and old people. Unlike his grim predecessor, Big Josh was a compassionate and loving fellow. When Big Josh became a deacon as well, he took the trouble to befriend Simon du Roi. His cruiser could be seen at least twice a week at Simon's cabin.

Leaning his mighty elbows on the dirty golden pine table in Rosetta's coffee shop, Josh told me the disquieting story of Simon du Roi's life. Tears ran down Big Josh's baby face, and I felt like crying too. But to make a long story short....

Half a year ago Simon du Roi disappeared, leaving no forwarding address. The door of the cabin was padlocked and the green beans in the vegetable garden, ready to be picked, rotted away on their leafy stems. Josh had looked

through the windows at the cabin, but Simon seemed to have taken no furniture along.

"He's probably gone to Holland for a long visit," he had told the deacons. But even after six months Simon had not returned. Funny how the parishioners, although they never had much contact with him, missed him. What was deacon Jorritsma going to do with his week-old *Christian Courier* which he had faithfully handed to Simon every Sunday morning?

Then, dramatically, events took a turn. The post-master thrust a letter into Josh's hands.

"Here Josh, this guy used to go to your church," Josh turned the envelope in his hand. A lawyer's office in Rotterdam. Ever seen an oversized constable shake with sudden fear? Had Simon died while visiting relatives in the Netherlands?

But who says he had gone there?

Without hesitation the big Dutchman ripped the letter open. Luckily the lawyer had had the foresight to write in English. Slowly Josh took off his cap and scratched his monk's ring of curly hair. Wow! The last will of Simon's great-aunt Theodora Frederica Lambertine du Roi, leaving a Simon du Roi, *zegge en schrijve*, — to wit: the unexpected windfall of 200,000 guilders.

For some time Big Josh had wanted to enter Simon du Roi's cabin. Inside there must be some clues to where Simon had gone. Now or never! Down Main Street the cruiser crept. He always drove slowly within the small town, for speed indicated disaster or criminal activity and would set tongues wagging. Once outside the 30 km zone, Big Josh blew the dust out of his cruiser's engine. Within 10 minutes he stood inside the cabin. Constables have fine ways to bypass padlocks.

On the table lay a *Christian Courier*, which certainly would not be much help.

He searched the cabin from top to bottom. The only thing he could establish was that Simon had not taken his winter clothes along. On his way out he took the CC from the kitchen table and crumpled it into his pocket, it being a six-month-old issue.

The wide berth of the century-old oak office chair creaked under Josh's weight. He savored his five sandwiches and thermos coffee mightily. A discomforting bulky side pocket made him shift in his chair. Oh yes, that *Christian Courier*! He spread it out before him and slowly turned the pages. He'd read the thing half a year ago, but it all seemed new to him. How can people forget so soon? he thought. He came upon the advertising pages. One ad had been neatly scissored out. He gave it no thought. Not every constable has detective in-

these ads are confidential."

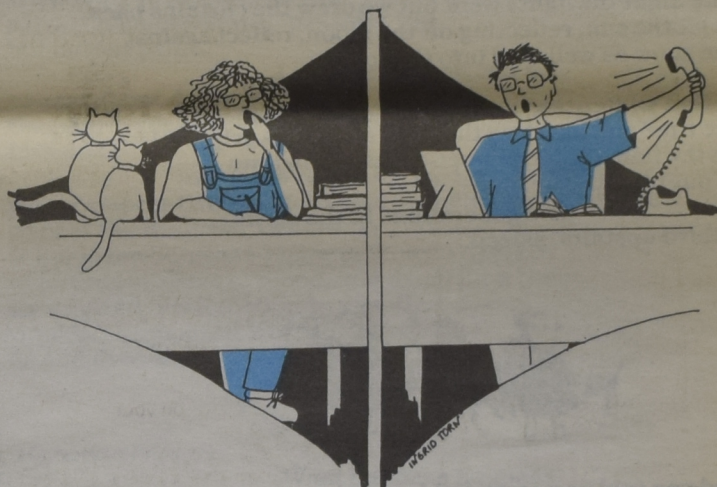
"But there are 200,000 guilders involved!" squealed the voice on the other end, so loudly that Marian Van Til looked up in alarm, almost convinced that Stan de Jong, the office manager, was slaughtering a young pig.

Bert held the telephone away from his ear and when the squeeling subsided, held it closer again.

"I know what you could do, Constable. Write the woman yourself. Who knows, after six months she still may be unmarried!"

Thus Big Josh wrote the shortest letter in his life. "Dear Madam, would you by any chance have become, or will you become, Mrs. Du Roi?"

Exactly one week later the phone rang in Bowersville's tiny police station.



stincts.

Three hours later it dawned on him! Why had Simon cut out that ad? What time was it? Four o'clock; a busy CC staff would certainly still be working.

The next morning Big Josh spread out the three fax sheets of the page with the missing ad on his old office desk. His heart pumped faster and faster. Some real detective work was to be performed! Wow! The cut-out piece read: *Christian woman seeks Christian, non-smoking companion with a view to joining for life. Reply under No. 112.*

The next step was easy enough. He phoned the CC office again. "No," said Bert Witvoet adamantly, "you can't have the woman's phone number;

"Josh? This is Simon!" For at least 30 seconds Big Josh was unable to talk, busy as he was to find a Kleenex to wipe the tears from his baby face.

"Simon," he whispered finally, "get yourself over here, pronto. There are 200,000 guilders waiting for you!"

A jubilant voice from High River, Alberta, bounced off a satellite to Bowersville, Ontario. "Josh, you know something? My face doesn't twitch anymore!"

Herman de Jong is a church organist, woodworker and freelance writer who lives in Jordan, Ont. He wrote regularly for CC, in Dutch, for the last four years before the paper went to English-only on April 1, 1989. He then continued to write stories in English for a year and has contributed stories occasionally since then.

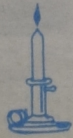
Poetry



The Sheep Reports

A narrative poem by John Terpstra

to my parents,
on their fiftieth wedding anniversary,
and to their generation —
the war that ended,
and the weekly paper that began
serving their immigrant community,
also fifty years ago.



The night the lights went out we drew the curtains back,
to let the sun, reflecting off the moon, reflect against
the snow as well, and into the room.

Flooded
in that whiteness, our candle seemed to specify
the time and place, as the wick's tenuous grip
on the flame made puppet-dancing shadows
of our plight.

Two generations in the dark:
a third upstairs, asleep.



And you told us a story we'd never heard,
about the visit to your boyfriend's home
to see his folks, who'd soon be yours as well,
in the heart of the countryside, in the heart of a war,
when there also was no light; no light was allowed
to pinpoint where you sat below the bombers
flying west across the channel, or the ones droning inland,
eastward to German towns.

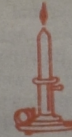
Odd, these inbetweens
and opposites: that it was your home which could betray;
or that, within its learned familiar safety,
where curtains enclose against the night,
you kept the curtains back, exposing yourselves,
and let the countryside darkness marry
the one that filled the room,
to not be given, or give yourselves away.

It was New Year's Eve; the year before the war's end.
The sun's reflection off the moon reflected
on a thin manna of snow, and too, you told us then,
on a flock of sheep — sheep! — that herded past
the house, along the road, briefly,
wonderful and bold, reflecting
to your Bible eyes

what little light
they could not help but do.

The story almost slipped past us at first,
before we called it back. And now,
all the lines of type that have been set,
and all the letters that were sent, the books
and phone calls, photographs, the recent hospital visits,
anniversaries,

in all the fifty years since then,
have gathered in that room; the small Witmarsum
living room, and ours, here, around a story
you might never have said, had not the power failed.



Fathers and mothers are one
strange creature, who with their children, can be
inscrutable, as some say God is.
Mother in kitchen, fixes a silent dinner, her back
to the world, not speaking; angered or betrayed
by some unknown he's said,
or we've done.

Father, prototype, sits in his chair,
reading the news on sheets of print
that rise and cover his face like a cloud,
closing the day behind a mountain
the eons have thrown up
between the generations.

The Journal. The Contact. The Courier.



The war we fight now is to understand —
and on the other side of silent, untorn walls,
you'll read the stories that you've told,
told back:

The Sheep Reports;
in which, one day, the *razzia* comes,
and men, like lambs, are rounded up,
herded to the town square, and marched
to a train that will take them to work,
a forced migration, from which some may return,
some not.

She sees him, in among the others,
and runs back to town, to his boss, to the mayor,
the kommandant, until her pure persistent energy
sparks the phone call that nets a slip of paper,
signed by the fuhrer's bureaucrat,
freeing him.

And runs returning to the station.
The men, now loaded on, wait. The soldier
who halts her, smiles. She's pretty; it shows
in the photographs. They weren't all bad,
she'll say, and you'd do anything — but shudders
her distaste, stiffens after half a century
as his arm goes around her shoulder, and he parades
the train's length with her, past faces frozen
in the windows, of men who are not
the fiancé whose name he's calling out —
the fiancé who doesn't respond,
and rescue her, rescuing him.
Who wasn't on the train.



He's slipped away,
is hiding in a neighbor stranger's cellar,
where many of his age return, still today.

Born to parents just freed from a war,
and raised through poor times, you stood ready
at the door to your own lives
when war blew open again.

And we were born to you,
in western calm, and overseas; have purchased
every conceivable item, invented more

to serve invented needs, chased advertisements, flyers
memorized like biblical verse, with our arms
swung loosely round each other, and talking, talking,
baffled by some part of you that always felt
beyond our reach, subdued.



You bring him his paper now, in the hospital room.
What happened fifty years ago still is news,
a living memory. It will live, later too,
but only as print.

I ask, but no one cares
to hear about, he says, the Five Day War,
that short workweek of fight when the Dutch withstood
invasion;

about his company, trooping to a town
where snipers tried to pick them — their own: their own
were at the windows, behind the curtains, shooting.
It drove the Sergeant-Major mad, who'd talked
of fording streams of blood, and dying for a cause.
He cracked, fired randomly, rapidly,
wouldn't stop, until *We had no choice:*
he had to be shot.

He had to be shot.

What happens happens
after again, when events replay, and play the mind,
and the enemy is found alive
within that deadly loud report,

and stinks fresh
memories of how he redefines what's evil, sin;
and offers a hand to carry the sack
in which potatoes weigh each hard, right thing
you had no choice but do:
offers a chair, machine-rolled cigarette,
and with a warm, comradely grin
launches the innocent questioning.

And when the foreign occupiers, in full control,
moved their interrogations to another room,
they chose Burmania Huis, head office
to a firm that underwrote, in peace, insurance
policies: life.

Continued on page 20...

Poetry



The Sheep Reports

...Continued from page 19

The underground got it first,
the miserable joke, and got in ahead,
hid a microphone, and from their own small room
behind the bookstore selling Bibles, listened
to the questions climb the stairs
to torture, and torture mount
the tortured man; the weak
who surprised, and didn't break,
and the strong, who might reveal a name.

There was a silence in each question, a silence
at the listening post behind the shelves
where guides to devotion, prayerbooks, stood;
a silence in the wheels of the bike,
quickly dispatched to the named one's home;
a silence that enwrapped the men
who worked beneath the war's ground,
bound in their committed silence,
a kind of marriage,

in which they rarely knew
each other's Christian name,
so that if their turn came to answer,
they couldn't even taste the sweeter pleasure
of lying to the enemy's face,
but had to truthfully deny it; say,
"I don't know him, friend."

And even after the war, he says, we rarely knew
or found who our friends had been,
who may have saved our lives.

And it hasn't all been filled, this silence.
And the cock still crows, three times at least
for every rising day,
and some, whom others

never blamed, weep
with the ones who rode the bike,
or who were named, and hid; with the ones
who didn't speak, but listened, closely,
to every word they did not choose to hear.

I know. It's some poor celebration, after fifty years,
to float the things that you preferred to drop
over the rail.

You married four months to the day
after liberation, and later shipped with other thousands
to the land those freeing soldiers came from.
It's from this country, too, our childhood stories
mostly came; as if some door had opened
and your lives could begin, but only
after the other had shut, and an ocean filled
the dark room between.

An ocean
that for some of us, born here,
at times feels more like home
than here does.

But those sheep!
floating past the house, on New Year's Eve;
parading their dumb vulnerability
for all the twisted, darkened world
to see...

I still think of them, their light
reflecting what little light there was, or is,
more and more.

John Terpstra is a poet and a cabinet maker/woodworker living in Hamilton, Ont. He has published four books of poetry. One book, *Forty days and Forty Nights*, won the Bressant prize for poetry in 1988; another, *Captain Kintail*, won the CBC radio literary competition award in poetry in 1992.

Author's notes

Biblically speaking, we are all sheep. The title, "The Sheep Reports," means two things: first, that this is a report on some of those sheep, and second, that it is one of those sheep who is reporting. The poem is about one generation trying to understand another, in this case the children trying to understand the parents.

The poem begins by recalling the evening my parents told my wife and me a story from World War II: a herd of sheep that flocked past the house on New Year's Eve, during the blackout. That story, which we hadn't heard before, helped focus other stories I heard as a child (the lines following, "And now..."), and to cast light on past and present family history. But, ironically, the story might never have been told at all if the lights hadn't gone out during this one particular visit.

The poem then speaks more generally about fathers, mothers, and their children ("one strange creature..."). A child observes parental behavior, and then, later, as part of its own "war to understand" retells the stories the parents told. And it is as if the parents were to read their own stories in the newspaper, or in the *Christian Courier* you are holding in your hands right now. The "silent, untorn walls" between the generations are made of that paper. In other words, they are a wall, but the wall is actually very thin, and it may be used to bring the two generations to a closer understanding.

And in that paper are The Sheep Reports: stories from WWII, a time in which the moral order our parents grew up in was turned upside down, and they were herded like sheep

through events over which they had no control.

The first is a story of a razzia. At the end of it, the three lines beginning "He's slipped away..." is a kind of nod to Hugh Cook and the father he portrays in his novel *The Homecoming Man*: a father who could not say what had happened during the war, or had no words to express it, or out of some inner necessity was forced to hide it.

After those three lines, the poem compares general living and growing-up conditions in the '20s and '30s (theirs) with those of the '60s and '70s (ours).

In the next section ("You bring him his paper..."), the time is the present. The father is in the hospital — as my own father was while I was writing this (the "You..." is mom). Their generation is aging, rapidly now it seems, and this gave a sense of urgency to the writing.

Two of his war stories follow.

In the end, I apologize — this poem seems a poor way to celebrate their fifty years of marriage, or fifty years of the *Christian Courier*. A fiftieth anniversary prompts reflection, though, in this case the reflections of someone who is both Canadian and Dutch, or neither, but finds himself living somewhere between the two countries (the lines, "An ocean..."), wondering how he came to be there, as he wonders how his parents came to be where they are. What binds us, all, more than race or blood ties, is membership in the flock of Christ.

Working with Mr. Dick

Dear Bertus:

Of course I've been reading CC for more than 40 years. I read it from the very beginning. I was with Farenhorst and company at that important meeting when we set up some basics. At that time there were some Dutch ministers present whose names were unbeknownst to me. I had never heard or said those names before. This must have been the year 1951/52?

My sister Gert and I often helped Mr. Dick with his English compositions. But whatever we did for Mr. Dick, it was always a great pleasure. I was a frequent visitor at his home when I taught on West 5th (Hamilton Christian School), and prior to that in the public school we associated.

I remember a person present at the first CC meeting was Rev. Schaafsma. He was my pastor years later when I taught in Burlington, Ont.

If I wasn't a continuous subscriber, Dad sure was. But I must say I have paid for several subscriptions for friends or relatives. I don't know if they have kept up with your enviable editorials, but here's hoping they did.

Jennie Visser
Dundas, Ont.



NC

Best wishes to
Christian Courier
as it celebrates five decades of
Reformed Christian journalism.
You are a remarkable testimony
to God's faithfulness and grace.

Calvin College — its
administration, faculty,
and staff — salutes you!

Gaylen J. Byker
President
September 14, 1995

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decades of Reformed Christian
journalism in Canada. Your
publication is to be congratulated
for seeking to proclaim the truth, care
and rule of Jesus Christ.

Christians across Canada can appreciate
your reporting on events in the Christian com-
munity, your opinions infused by Scripture and
the Spirit, and opportunities your periodical gives for
contact and discussion among believers.

Many of your Reformed readers are dear to us too, as
partners in the task to give God's translated, life-changing
Word to the world's Bibleless people. May we both continue to
effectively use the printed word — you through your excellent
publication and we through the
translated Scriptures — to spread
our Lord's kingdom.

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We thank God for CC's 50 years of service to our Christian community...

- for playing an important role in informing Christians about the needs of people in Canada and around the world.
- for faithfully reporting news about international development and relief ministries.
- for reminding Canadian Christians about their role in responding to hunger and poverty.
- for educating your readers about what it means to serve Christ in our ever-changing world.



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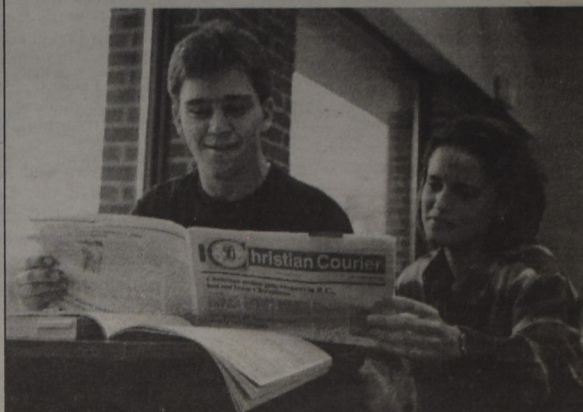
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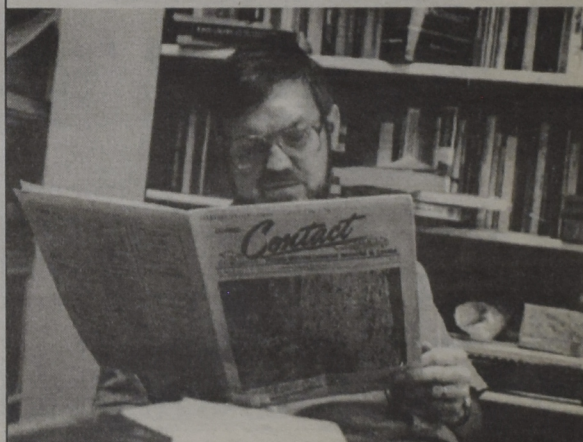


Every week, members of the Redeemer College
community read a new issue of the *Christian Courier*
with interest. You inform us; you challenge us; you
refresh our spirits; you help our students find work;
you call us back again and again to the common root
we have in Christ.

Thank you.

Thank you for your diligence—for keeping the flame of
Reformed Christian journalism burning brightly in
Canada for half a century.

Congratulations from all of us on 50 years of good
reading; and by God's grace, may there be many more.



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Notes from foreign lands

Why those living abroad keep reading CC

CC contacted overseas subscribers and asked them about themselves, why they read Christian Courier, and if they have any advice for the future.

Thomas H. Boehm is a Canadian who is married to a Japanese woman; they live in **Japan** where he teaches English. He reads CC because "it keeps me in contact with the Reformed church in Canada," he says, adding: "In a country where I hear very little Canadian news, it's always a pleasure to read CC." He advises us not to change. "If we're looking for a different point of view, there are plenty of other papers."

Mr. and Mrs. H.A. Hemmen live in **Emmen, the Netherlands**. Mr. Hemmen is a Dutch subject, Mrs. Hemmen a Canadian. He is a teacher; she, a nurse.

"We lived in Canada for many years and have been subscribers since about 1968," they write. They took CC with them to the Netherlands "to keep in contact with the Christian Reformed Church scene and with the Canadian scene in general." They urge us to "keep up the good work!"

Gerald W. Van Leeuwen also lives in the **Netherlands** but worked in Canada for 25 years. He is a retired businessman.

He says, "I enjoyed reading CC during the time I spent in Canada and don't want to miss it here!" His advice: "Keep on searching for the truth and essence of Christianity, even if you have to go beyond the boundaries of denominationalism and traditionalism."

Rev. Tyman and Mrs. Cobi Hofman live in **Grand Rapids, Michigan**. Rev. Hofman is a retired Christian Reformed pastor. The Hofmans are Albertans and served First CRC in Calgary as well as congregations in Montana, California, Illinois and Michigan.

They write: "With this we extend our sincere congratulations and express our fervent hope and prayer that you may be blessed with continued success for at least another 50 years. You have done a fine job in facing awesome challenges in all kinds of stormy weather, remaining true to your Reformed beginnings and to the Lord who called you to this service."

"CC has demonstrated that it has the kind of Christian maturity which is so sadly lacking in much of the church and in those who speak for, with and to the church. May your tribe increase."

Met her husband through CC

Mrs. Charmaine Haan of **Alliston, Ontario**, told us that CC changed her life in a big way; she is not the only one who has had this experience through CC:

"I thank the Lord for *Calvinist Contact* (now *Christian Courier*) — I met my husband on a personal [ad] in your paper 17 years ago, and was happily married till the Lord took him home three years ago." She added, "I want to wish you God's blessings. Keep up the good work, pleasing God in all you do."

The time is right for

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"As I con-
gratulate
you,
I also
honor
those
who
started
this
tradition."

Carl D. Tuyl

One more 'Small Talk' (for old times' sake)

Alice Los

God's good gifts

The call I had been waiting for came at 5 a.m. I stumbled out of bed, grabbing the receiver in the next room on the third ring.

"Mom?" I heard.

"Ja, son."

"It's time. Can you come?"

"Ja, see you soon."

Minutes later I was on my way to the farm on the second concession just out of town. It was still dark on this last day of August but my car was not the only one making its way out of the neighborhood and onto the highway. Soon I turned onto the familiar gravelroad where the lit windows of the barns evoked tranquillity.

Quietly I slipped into the house. The small suitcase on the kitchen table, packed, but only half closed, as if waiting for some last-minute things, was an eloquent witness to the magnitude of the moment. The young woman about to give birth, whom I had come to love as my daughter-in-law, was calmly in control.

We whispered a few woman-to-woman exchanges and decided it was time to go to the hospital. As the fifth-time parents-to-be turned out of the driveway the relief milker stepped into the barn. Over the drive shed I noticed the hesitant light of what would be an overcast day.

I decided against dozing off again. I had too much to ponder and to pray for. Would it be a boy or a girl? Would all prove to be well?

One by one the four children under my temporary care woke up. The eyes of the older ones lit up when they saw me.

"Is Mom in the hospital? Is this the day?"

Another girl

The air of excitement was sustained till well after breakfast, throughout chores — doing dishes, making beds and feeding calves. Then the long wait started. Inevitably, the mood turned to restlessness.

"I wish Dad would come" was the refrain of the hour. And, anxiously, "I hope nothing's wrong...." Together we decided the new baby was probably a little slow-poke.

Then: "Dad is here!" Three girls and a lone boy stormed outside, dancing around the parked van.

"What is it, Dad? What is it?"

From my place in the open door I heard the answer: "It's a girl!"

Briefly, seven-year-old Derek seemed defeated; he had wanted a brother so badly. But then the excitement caught him again. We gathered for lunch and a prayer of thanksgiving and praise. Derek still seemed wistful. I ventured to help him.

"You know that babies are a gift from God, don't you, Derek?" He nodded unwillingly, but I continued, "And do you know that God always knows what he is doing?" His interest perked and I briefly elaborated.

Learning from you own lessons

Later, when they all dressed up for a short visit to the maternity ward with their dad, Derek's enthusiasm easily matched that of his sisters. Smugly, I chalked one up for wise old grandma. That is, until in the silence that fell when the door closed behind the chattering little troop I almost heard myself think: *Speak for yourself! Do you always trust the Lord to know best? You may see this brand-new granddaughter as a perfect gift from above, but do you always accept your own disappointments so cheerily?*

I knew I was caught. This grandma would do well to practise what she had so piously preached. At that moment I wasn't sure how I would react to a serious setback, since I've been known to be upset over a downpour on a great crop of drying hay — on what wasn't even my own field! As I tidied the kitchen I thought that a flash of insight exposing one's own weaker points also is one of God's good gifts.

That evening, when her opa and I came to see the newborn — Janelle — and her radiant mother, there was the gift of joy and gratitude.

And, perhaps not incidentally, in her home little Janelle will be exposed to *Christian Courier*. May it lead to a life-long blessed acquaintance!

Alice Los was a columnist for Christian Courier and now lives in Listowel, Ont.



The longest subscriber...

When we asked readers to tell us if they had been long-term subscribers — and perhaps the longest subscriber — we didn't know you would be quite so enthusiastic about it! But we're glad you were. (Now if we can get the next generation to be that enthusiastic about us, with God's help we'll be around for another 50 years.)

It became apparent from your responses that it would be difficult to determine whether only one person or couple had subscribed longer than any other: the records from the pre-computer days are gone, and we have had a number of you with us almost from the beginning.

We enjoyed your comments; some were short; others told us a little about you (always interesting to hear); and some offered advice (for which we thank you). So rather than featuring one subscriber, we'll let you eavesdrop on many who wrote or called to tell us...

I have been a subscriber since September 1952.

Gerard Bouma
Grand Rapids, Mich.

...So far as we know we have read your paper since August 1956. We started in Prince Edward Island but moved many, many times. But the paper always came along; we love reading it. We congratulate you on your 50th anniversary and many more.

Bill and Tanya Deurwaarder
Blackstock, Ontario

...We are in Canada for 48 years. We have read CC [for] way over 40 years.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Haanstra
Dunnville, Ont.

...We have been reading Calvinist Contact since 1954. We like most of it, but not everything. But we'll send you a check for another year (translated from Dutch).

George and Jane Mozes
Newmarket, Ont.

...We would like you to know that we have been subscribers to CC since 1953. We arrived in Canada (Brockville, Ont.) in May 1953, and our friends [came] in July. We did not know where they ended up living until in February 1954 we read the birth announcement of their twins in Calvinist Contact, and since then we have remained close friends. In March 1955 we placed our first birth announcement in CC, and six more after that. And now our children place our anniversary announcement in CC.

So times have changed, but we praise God for his faithfulness from generation to generation.

Congratulations on your 50th anniversary! We wish you God's blessing for the future — and much wisdom.

Bert and Jo Oosterhof
North Augusta, Ont.

...I don't know all the dates from when CC started, but we married in 1949 in Chatham and were subscribers from the beginning [of our marriage] until now (46 years).

Mr. and Mrs. H. Riepma
Chatham, Ont.

...I lived in Neerlandia, Alberta, from 1937 to 1963. The first Canadian Calvinist was printed in Edmonton; Contact was printed in Ontario — I lost track what year that was. Well, I have been a reader ever since it was printed, and I am still reading it. I don't always agree with what is printed; and there are big words that we old people can't make head or tails out of.

C.H. Rowaan
Smithville, Ont.

...I would like to submit our mom for perhaps being one of the longest subscribers: 40 plus years. She is 87 years old and lives at Holland Christian Homes (Brampton, Ont.).

P.S. We're subscribers too!

John and Janet Schenk

...We must have been a subscriber for about 40 years or more, steadily. I remember well that in the beginning it was called Contact by Mr. Farenhorst. At that time we lived in Brampton (Ont.).

Elsie Tilstra
Dunnville, Ont.

...I believe I can truthfully say that I (we) have had a subscription since early 1957. I arrived in Canada (Toronto) in November 1956. I applied for a teaching job through CC in early 1957 (and got it in Holland Marsh, Ont.).

I don't know how I got the money to spare, but this was the first subscription to any paper in Canada for me. As far as we can both remember, we have never interrupted our subscription, even though my name changed in 1965. We still think it's a great paper. We usually read it from cover to cover and wouldn't want to miss it, although now we're both retired.

Mike and Joanne
Tulp-VanGelderén

...We were married on May 31, 1964 by Dr. Remkes Kooistra. On that day he gave us a subscription to Calvinist Contact and we have renewed our subscription ever since, which makes it over 31 years. We continue to look forward to reading CC for many more years to come.

A. Vander Hoeven
Toronto

...I have been a subscriber to CC since June 1950.

Mrs. H. Veenstra
Barrie, Ont.

Yes, I have been a subscriber from the very beginning of C.C.

H. Vissers
Abbotsford, BC

...First of all, congratulations with the 50th anniversary of CC. We have always enjoyed reading it. We cannot prove it, but we think that since 1953 or '54, or maybe even '52 we have read it — about that time. We wish you God's blessing upon the work you are doing to give us every week again something worth reading which has played an important part in our lives.

Klaas and Jenny Visbeek
Woodstock, Ont.

...I don't know, but I think I received CC for more than 35 years. We came to Canada in September 1947 — 48 years ago, and lived in Houston, B.C. until July 1973. My husband passed away January 1970 and our address was then under his name as P. Vriend-Koen because of the many Vriend's living in Houston, and two P. Vriend's. I enjoy reading your paper, but want to remind you that you should give the readers in B.C. more time to react to your paper, as the mail is not moving fast enough.

Elisabeth Vriend
Abbotsford, B.C.

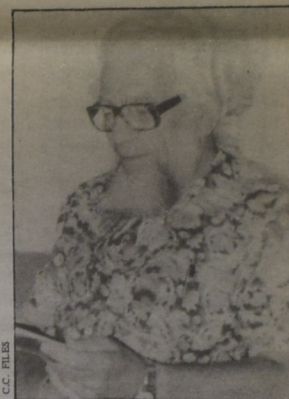
God has blessed his 'foolish' enterprise

Rem Kooistra

Calvinist Contact now *Christian Courier*, has had two names, three addresses and seven editors. But the fact that it still exists today is, apart from its excellent content, a tribute to the faithfulness of its readers. I would like to congratulate all CC subscribers on their continuous support of this independent Christian weekly. I hope you'll read and enjoy CC for many years to come.

It has been my privilege to write for CC periodically during the last 40 years. I have also served on its editorial committee. As I look back on this time, memories flood into my mind.

Right from the beginning CC was serious business, though many people predicted that an independent Christian weekly would be impossible in Canada. If weekly church papers such as *De Wachter* or *The Banner* could not fly on their own wings but needed ecclesiastical financial help, how would this small immigrant paper survive? How would it cover news from a country as wide as Canada, from a continent larger than all of Europe?



Rem Kooistra

Not just nostalgia

Many people thought CC was just a sign of nostalgia, proof that immigrants mistakenly want to hold on to their former culture. Reading CC, therefore, was just money down the drain, some said.

But God has graciously blessed this "foolish" initiative and CC is still here, along with many other "foolish" enterprises from those pioneers — CLAC, Christian schools and colleges and the Institute for Christian Studies, the Christian farmers and business organizations, CJL and CPJ.

I remember three of CC's editors. Dick Farenhorst was a solid, trusted Reformed leader. Influenced by the well-known minister from Amsterdam, S.G. De Graaf, Farenhorst gave us sound theology. With Keith Knight the paper "modernized." Knight was a Christian journalist and improved the appearance and communication ability of CC offering greater variety. The present editor, Bert Witvoet, is an educator with a broad cultural perspective.

Looking ahead, I hope the paper may have many more years to serve the Christian community and our country with sound theological insight, great journalism and artistic skill, and with a broad and deep Christian perspective which is both convincing and appealing.

Rem Kooistra is a retired Christian Reformed minister who lives in Waterloo, Ont.

Noseberg in transition

Carl Tuyl, having been a Christian Reformed pastor for almost 30 years, knows first hand the demands we who are CRC place on our ministers. This humorous satire gently pokes fun at the CRC penchant for perfect pastors.

Carl D. Tuyl

The church of Noseberg had become vacant as a result of a strange ailment of its minister. The Reverend Van Twingeren had begun to suffer from uncontrollable hiccups in the pulpit. Nowhere else than on the pulpit did these hiccups plague the ministry of Van Twingeren. He would sit at the bedside of patients and offer his ministerial solace without interruptions; he would preside over council meetings with impeccable precision; and as Mrs. Van Elmwood, who once a week helped Mrs. Van Twingeren with the vacuuming and cleaning of the manse, told everybody, the romantic component of the marriage was not disturbed by Reverend Van Twingeren's affliction. It was only after he had climbed the 10 steps to the rather elevated pulpit that his diaphragm engaged in these involuntary contractions. Pastor Van Twingeren's hiccups were, so to speak, of homiletic origin.

At first the congregation was quite supportive and understanding. The bulletin editor, as well as the chairperson of the council, admonished the congregation to make allowances for the pastor's condition. Members of the congregation began to offer helpful hints which, according to the people who offered these therapeutic suggestions, had cured uncounted sufferers all over the world.

Among all these proposed treatments was also an anonymous note — Van Twingeren thought it came from the Young People's Society — which asked if the Reverend would be willing to preach once on Isaiah 16:11 from the King James version: "...My bowels shall sound like a harp..." The pastor discarded that request as frivolous.

But eager to please his parishioners and not inclined to refuse any offer of help or support, he accepted most of the multitude of advice with gratitude. He also applied himself faithfully to these supposedly curative measures.

It did, however, not enhance the spirit of worship when in the middle of a rather involved explanation of military protocol in connection with the centurion who had come to seek healing for his servant, Van Twingeren suddenly interrupted his sermon by a rather lengthy session of blowing into a paper bag.

At another occasion while using this remedy, the bag exploded, which woke up not a few worshippers. And even though following that episode there was a period of uninterrupted homiletic delivery, albeit in a voice that seemed to come from under the floor, to say that the congregation was paying undivided attention would have been an exaggeration.

Neither did the congregation respond with loud "amens" and "hallelujahs" when Van Twingeren, in the middle of an exhortation about generosity, quickly descended from the pulpit and ran up and down the aisle like a marathon runner with dynamite in his blood. That suggestion had come from Mrs. Gravenlust, whose grandfather had experienced sudden healing by running up and down the street of the village where the good man had lived.

At another occasion while holding forth on the measurements of Noah's Ark and their relation to seaworthiness, Van Twingeren got into trouble again, and he invited the clerk of council to ascend the pulpit and lend succor by patting the Reverend's back.

This suggestion had been hand-delivered on behalf of the deacons who in a recent diaconal meeting had read the charge recited at their ordination and were subsequently profoundly moved by their commission to "be compassionate to the needy."

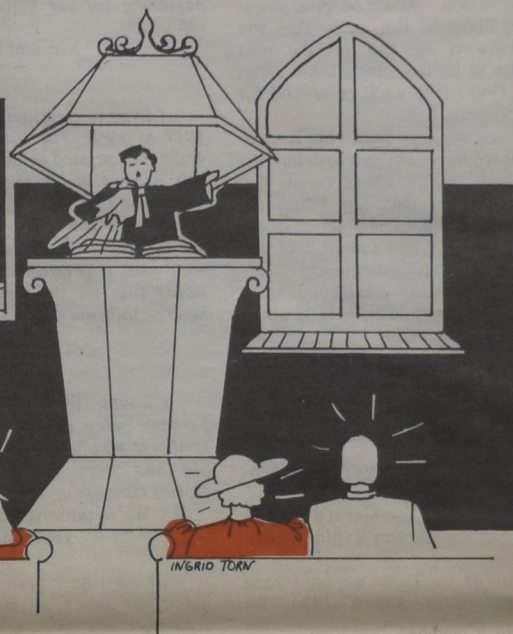
Alas the clerk of council, a farmer with biceps whose circumference approached the diameter of a large tree, fulfilled his mission of mercy with so much enthusiasm that even though it did cause Van Twingeren's hiccups to cease, it also precipitated an attack of respiratory arrest which literally

left the pastor breathless and unable to continue leading the worship service.

The clerk, a dyed-in-the-wool officebearer with many years of experience, took over while Van Twingeren lounged in the pulpit chair gasping for air like a fish out of water. "Let us skip all the way to the doxology" the clerk announced to the anxious congregation. "And I will pronounce a non-clerical blessing so that everybody can go home." After the congregation then sang the hymn of the premature conclusion the clerk rose up to his full impressive height and pronounced: "The best to all of you, Amen," which considering the circumstances was not such a bad benediction.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

The most drastic proposal for alleviating the situation came from the janitor. He reasoned that the pulpit was too high, and that the elevation from which the Reverend delivered his biblical elocutions raised him to levels of altitude that offered much too rarefied air. It was just a case of lack of oxygen, argued the janitor to a



well-attended council meeting which had convened with only one item on the agenda: how the hiccups should be handled.

The janitor, who had just finished his weekly cleaning and looked as if one could boil soup from his pants, spoke, nevertheless, with eloquent persuasion. With common sense apparent in his proposal he contemplated a total and drastic lowering of the pulpit. "Break the thing down," he said, "and bring the Reverend back to earth."

The council engaged in a lengthy discussion of this proposal. Some of the elders opined that lowering of the pulpit was against the tradition of Reformed theology. They cited the example of Calvin's pulpit in St. Peter's church in Geneva, from which the old Reformer preached his trio of weekly sermons. That argument was supported by elder Trueblood, who noted that Martin Luther's pulpit in Wittenberg certainly equalled the height of the St. Peter's podium, and that although Brother Martin had suffered many afflictions, neither acrophobia nor hiccups had been part of that Reformer's many infirmities.

One of the rookie elders, digging deep into the recesses of his mind, where long-forgotten catechism lessons and sermons had left a certain indefinite residue of knowledge, remarked, with the heavy odor of piety cleaving to his words: "Aaron wasn't called a high priest for nothing, was he?" He added that it would be a frosty Friday before he would see the pulpit brought down to earth.

At the end of all the motions and suggestions and speeches, the council, true to its reputation for variance of opinion voted nine to eight for lowering the pulpit. Two elders and one deacon abstained from voting. The reason was explained by the spokesperson of that trio: "We don't even know how much it's going to cost. You think Solomon built the temple without an accountant?"

One of them, in an effort to base the abstention on the bedrock of biblical grounds, added, "No Sirree, Solomon, who was wise, must have kept a pretty close check on expenses."

The other two officebearers nodded their agreement with this exegetical proof of their point of view. The upshot of the

meeting was contained in the final motion before adjournment: "...That the building committee be instructed to lower the pulpit to a level no higher than two feet above the floor."

Alas, the building committee was in diaspora. Two of its members were temporarily residing in Florida, one was in Arizona, and one was visiting his sister in the Netherlands. It was, so to speak, a *committee absconditus*. Only one member was currently residing at his permanent domicile. He notified the council that any action of the building committee would have to await the arrival of more moderate temperatures in Noseberg.

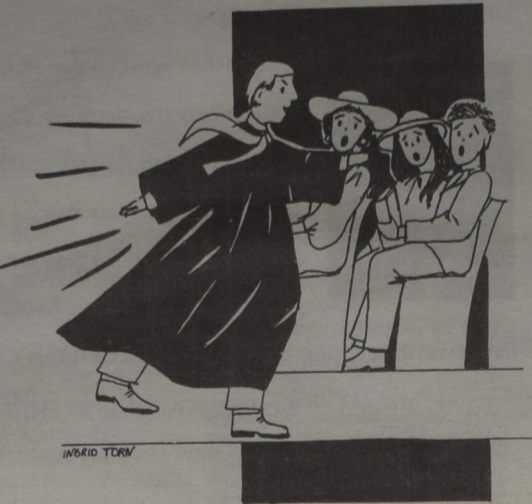
Meanwhile, the Reverend's condition did not improve. Quite frequently he lost his homiletic traction. The various admonitions of the Apostle Paul came to the congregation interspersed with loud hiccups. Likewise, the series on the Book of Jonah lost most of its impact through bag-blowing episodes.

During a wedding ceremony at which Van Twingeren officiated he came to the moving moment when the couple are officially declared to be husband and wife. Just then the poor man suffered another attack. Both the bride and the groom, who had just exchanged their vows, advised the Reverend to hold his breath till the hiccups would pass. Van Twingeren followed their advice. An anxious silence fell upon the assembled family and friends who had come to witness the joyous occasion. There followed a moment of seemingly endless barren liturgical nothingness.

Many were not acquainted with the Reverend's ailment and thought that the silence indicated some reservation on the minister's part which prevented him from the declaration of marriage. After an extended and nervous period the declaration was made, and the officiating organist, much relieved of her tension, let go of a few notes of the "Hallelujah Chorus."

† † † † †

The situation in the Noseberg congregation changed drastically when the Reverend announced that he would apply for emeritation on the grounds of having reached



the blessed age of sixty-four years and nine months. The council convened in an extra session to prepare a farewell evening for Van Twingeren, to rescind the motion to lower the pulpit and to form a calling committee.

At the farewell party the congregation poured out its appreciation for the faithful services performed by the Reverend. Van Twingeren was presented with an envelope which contained — as Mrs. Van Elmwood later made known — the sum of six hundred dollars and eighty-three cents. Two days later Van Twingeren preached his farewell sermon, which to the amazement of the congregation did not suffer from one single hiccup interruption. Indeed, at the following

social hour the Reverend announced that, miraculously, he had been cured.

Following all the ceremonies which made his departure a rather festive occasion, he and his wife joined the building committee in its southward trek and Van Twingeren never again had a case of the hiccups.

Back at Noseberg the newly formed calling committee decided to go about its duty in a truly scientific fashion. The committee spent six months composing a profile of the congregation. From this profile the committee extracted the required qualifications of the minister to be called.

A list of these qualifications was published in the bulletin. The next shepherd of the Noseberg congregation would

have to be:

1. A young, healthy, energetic minister with lots of experience, who would be able to relate well to old people and young people.

2. A minister who would give evidence of thorough and studious preparation of sermons, but who would also make frequent visits in the congregation.

3. A minister whose family would not exceed four in number, since Noseberg had only limited financial resources.

4. A minister who would be liturgically progressive, but who would not insist on too many changes in Noseberg's services. He (not she) would lead the congregation in inspired worship without engaging in any newfangled liberal practices.

5. A minister who would be able to develop and activate the talents in the congregation, but who would not delegate to others official ministerial functions, thus affirming the priesthood of preachers.

The congregation agreed that this summary was a fair assessment of its needs.

The next step was more involved. Names of ministers were tossed up and down the congregation like salad at dinner time. The calling committee received suggestions which in number of possible candidates almost equalled the total corps of ministers in the denomination. For every name suggested there were enthusiastic promoters and dedicated detractors. The saintliness of one candidate was diminished by a list of his

shortcomings offered with the finesse of a sledgehammer by those who advanced the name of a different clergy person.

The calling committee, which besides being comprised of people who did not know DOS from dinner, had several computer programmers as members, decided to follow the high-tech route. They consulted with a neighboring church which was so with-it and chic that it invited visitors to the cappuccino hour in the lounge.

As a result of this consultation the programmers devised one of these mysterious computer things that only the most initiated could understand. They fed into the church's computer so many details, biblical and ecclesiastical, that the machine's memory began to be exhausted. After some months in a semi-secret meeting the committee pushed the final question: "Dot*dot@ who is to be called by Noseberg?"

A long rather high-pitched whirring resulted, while blurry images filled the screen. Letters began to spell words, and the words formed a sentence: "Try Archangel Gabriel."

At the next congregational meeting the calling committee proposed the name of the Reverend Souterwand. He was a good one, they had heard.

Carl D. Tuyl has retired from the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church — but not because he suffered the hiccups while preaching. He is still active as executive director of Ontario's Multifaith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care.

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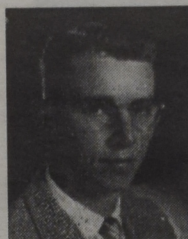
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Congratulations!

Dan F. Bloem
Public Relations Director

Congratulations *Christian Courier* on your 50th anniversary issue. While CC has not been part of Calvin's Hekman Library for that entire stretch, it has graced our shelves since 1951 making for a



relationship between two Reformed institutions that spans nearly five decades. We're proud of our long association with CC; we're also proud of a certain 1959 Calvin graduate named Albertus Witvoet. He's aged a little since his graduation picture, but, as with a good Dutch cheese, age has brought a smoothness and flavor worth savoring. Sort of describes *Christian Courier* too! On behalf of everyone here at Calvin, and particularly our many transplanted Canadian employees who, through CC, enjoy staying in touch with what happens north of the border, our thanks for your contributions to Christian journalism and Christian education.

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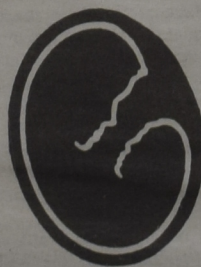
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A former editor looks back

It will be 20 years ago next spring — March 1976 — when a young Keith Knight became editor of Calvinist Contact. He was 26 years old when he picked up the pen which had been laid down by an ailing Dick Farenhorst.

Knight reflects upon those early years of transition and comments upon the evolution of CC's constituency over the past 20 years.

Keith Knight

The day is as vivid as if it were yesterday.

Somehow, walking into that second-storey office of *Calvinist Contact*, in the heart of Hamilton, seemed like an invasion of Dick Farenhorst's very soul.

He had lived and breathed *Calvinist Contact* for some 20 years, tackling church issues with evangelical zeal and providing tremendous leadership in a time when the printed word meant something.

Dick Farenhorst's pipe sat in an astray on the cluttered editor's desk when I walked in that first day.

I knew that he was home in bed, suffering from deadly cancer. He knew that he would be Home soon, with the Lord he loved so much.

That pipe sat on that desk for the next six months, a daily reminder to this young pup of an editor that I had a reputation — a legacy — to live up to.

For the months preceding that encounter with the pipe, negotiations had been under way with the three owners of *Calvinist Contact*, Holland Marsh business people.

They weren't sure whether they wanted to sell their paper to this young upstart. And this seven-year veteran of journalism, with the arrogance of youth, didn't know whether he wanted to buy the paper.

We all agreed that I would be hired as editor for one year, after which I had the option to purchase the paper. Well, that is what happened.

Going to the Kuyperians

There was a good measure of concern over my decision to move the paper from Hamilton to St. Catharines in the fall of 1976. It was viewed by many as a philosophical sell-out. It was during the heyday of the AACS (now the Institute for Christian Studies), and St. Catharines was perceived as being a philosophical centre of Kuyperian scholarship.

Readers expressed the concern that the paper was

going to those Kuyperians in St. Catharines. The reason for my move, however, was naively selfish.

I had been commuting to Hamilton from Welland daily, about an hour's drive. I wanted to have the office located closer to home, so I purchased a vacant furniture store in St. Catharines which became CC's home for the next decade.

Dick Farenhorst's pipe, lighter, and other memorabilia were rightfully given to Mrs. Farenhorst shortly after his death.

That memory still lingers.

Fellowship in a foreign land

No single person could ever claim ownership of *Christian Courier*, *Calvinist Contact*, *The Canadian Calvinist* or *Contact*.

The names changed to reflect the times. The audience, however, has been consistent over the past 50 years.

The paper was born out of a need of Dutch immigrants to maintain contact with each other — a fellowship of the saints in a foreign land.

That sense of community is every bit as real today as it was then, but today's community is much more fragmented.

The Reformed Christian community needed each other during those formative years of immigration in the 1940s and '50s. And even though that need is as obvious today, there seems to be a passionate desire today to think independently, live independently and worship independently.

The Reformed constituency in the mid-1970s was relatively homogenous. There were obscure pockets of neo-conservatism and there were brief burps of neo-Pentecostalism, but we were, by and large, a contented lot.

The church celebrated its Reformedness with exuberance and unanimity.

Shared views and attitudes

CC's constituency was united on the importance of Christian education, and membership within Christian organizations soared. That unity is evident in the fact that CC's circulation climbed to 10,500 paid subscribers in the late 1970s.

CC's audience shared the vision of Reformed thought: its views of Scriptures, of worship, of preaching were strikingly similar.

Historians will have a field day when it comes to

analyzing the evolution of CC's constituency. What happened between 1980 and 1995? What prompted the clash of theological cultures — pietists and Kuyperians, neo-conservatives and evangelicals?

That constituency is no longer like-minded. Society's penchant for individualism has touched the church in ways that are difficult to measure: we support Christian organizations only if we benefit by them; denominational loyalty is as strong as one's loyalty to a grocery store; congregations go shopping for tailor-made pastors who fit their shopping list of qualifications; support for Christian education is optional at best.

No easy answers

This is who we've become. We've evolved from a unified body of Kingdom builders into a collection of para-church Christians forced to deal with such issues as spousal abuse, homosexuality, inter-faith marriages and the effects of technology on the workplace.

The Christian community has been forced to break out of its pristine shell and to confront the issues which plague our society. Answers don't come easily.

All this places an incredible challenge to the *Christian Courier* staff: to be relevant to a constituency which is desperately looking for answers to a wide range of difficult societal and philosophical issues.

Talents

We won't be graded on the curve.

*Our gifts and abilities from God
will be the measuring rod.*

*To whom much is given
much will be expected.*

*The self-fulfilling mantra of our day
will be replaced.*

*Service and faithfulness will be
the new criteria
used by Christ
our Servant King.*

Ethnocentrism

*Locked in provincialism or in-group pride
voiced by such bumper-sticker exclusivism:
"If you're not Dutch, you're not much."*

It is no longer possible!

*Our broken world must be
claimed for Christ.
His Kingdom is coming,
not just an idealistic venture,
but an imperative
of the King.*

*Both poems by
Dr. John Van Schepen
Bellflower, Calif.*



Keith Knight during his years as editor of *Calvinist Contact*.

On the road for Christian education

A humorous bit of Reformed arm-twisting

In the October 9, 1959, issue of Calvinist Contact the beloved column "Immigranten Meimeringen" (Reflections of Immigrants) by Arie Dof (who in reality was Rev. Anthony De Jager) told in a humorous way about the early years of establishing a Christian school. We have translated this column for our anniversary issue. It gives a good flavor of those early days.

BW

Arie Dof

Schools have started again. Also our local Christian school. For the third year now the doors of our Christian school opened for the covenant youth, who, on September 8, poured in on foot, by bike and by bus. This year there were no fewer than 40 children who had come from a neighboring town about 20 miles from here. Christian parents there are co-operating with us under the motto: "Unity creates strength."

Yes, there are quite a few more pupils than last year, and I'm a little proud that I could have a hand in that, too. No sooner had I retired as elder last year than I was elected to the school board. I thought that would be a soft job, but, man alive, was I in for a surprise! We met on a monthly basis, just like the church council, and we had to make many visits, just like the elders. "From the frying pan into the fire," I said to Katrien, but according to her I should not say that because it concerned holy matters.

That the church council is not terribly impressed with the work of school board members is clear from the fact that the name of Arie Dof appeared in the church bulletin under nominations for elder.

"I hope they won't vote me in," I said to my wife.

"You don't hope that at all, Arie. You're much too human for that," was Katrien's answer, who after 25 years of happy marriage knows me fairly well.

"Well, alright, I hope I get the required votes." Paul himself said that if someone wants to be an elder he desires something noble. You don't have to feel embarrassed about this desire.

But to get back to my career as a Christian school board member: part of my task was to do home visits during the summer with those parents who, so

far, were still sending their kids to the public school. That's quite a few. Almost one third of the parents of our congregation is defaulting on this point. I ask myself whether that is the case also in other places where there is a Christian school.

Needlessly afraid

Together with Brother Van Vuren I had to go to seven families. I was fortunate to have Van Vuren as a partner. He'll take care of himself. He does honor to his name. He also is well endowed with the gift of the gab.

We scored success with our first family. We were barely inside for two minutes when Papa Verlinde told us that he would send his two children to the Christian school. Verlinde works in the insurance business and he has a lot of customers among "Canadians." Last year Verlinde was afraid of losing his bread and butter and afraid of the scorn of those Canadians. That's why he sent his boy and girl to the public school.

Why this sudden conversion? I had already opened my mouth to rebuke Verlinde and his wife but I did not get to that point. The master of the house told us that one of his best customers, a rich old lady, born and raised in Canada, had said to him that it was a great privilege that various parents could now send their children to a Christian school and that Verlinde, as a Christian from Dutch descent, must also be very grateful that his children would now get a truly Christian education. Verlinde had been quite ashamed. He had thought the matter over and he and his wife soon made the decision he now imparted to us.

While enjoying a cup of Maxwell House we continued to talk a bit more about this situation. We reached the conclusion that we should not be so quickly

afraid that Canadians will make us suffer for our principles. That's in conflict with Canadian character. I have never heard of anyone losing his job or making less money because he allowed his children to attend the Christian school. "I think," Verlinde said pensively, "I think that it's rather a small-minded Dutch trait to boycott each other because of principle."

We're against

Our next visit was to the family of Abraham Kuit, who was truck driver by profession. There, too, were school-aged children — Jacobus and Abraham. Abraham Sr. opened the door and looked at us with suspicion, as if we were hawking some sort of inferior product. But because he does come to church on occasion he did recognize us and said in an annoyed tone, "Come in."

We entered, but got no further than the hallway. A ladder stood against one of the walls and on top of that ladder we observed Mrs. Kuit. She was painting. She wore a pair of her husband's pants, with the legs rolled up to make them fit. With a disturbed face she looked down. "We can't use visitors now, Bram," she called out. She did not recognize us.

"They're from the church, Griet," said Abraham in the direction of the ceiling. Slowly Griet descended with paintbrush in hand.

"We're here for the Christian school," clarified Van Vuren. It was as if he had pushed a button. Quick as an elevator Mrs. Kuit ascended again to the ceiling. "You can give my portion to the dog," she brayed. "We don't want anything to do with that, right, Bram?"

"Yes, we're against," said Abraham sadly.

"Why?" I asked.

"Because," said Bram. At the same time he imploringly directed his eyes heavenward, which caused his face to take on a pious expression. However, he sought help only from Griet, who stood there swinging her paintbrush, dangerously balancing herself on the ladder.

She started cursing the church and the school which were always after their hard-

earned money. On top of that, she announced from her lofty place, they were not going to send Jacobusje and Brammetje to that Dutch school, because then those poor souls would not have a life with their neighborhood friends.

She said a lot more. Our ears started to glow after a while. We couldn't get a word in edgewise. Abraham Sr. looked upwards in adoration.

Covenant sign

A horsefly, awakened by the heavy sound vibrations, started to explore. He buzzed the speaker and finally landed on Mrs. Kuit's forehead. With a wild gesture, the woman waved at her forehead with her paint-smeared fingers, leaving behind a graceful red stripe. It closely resembled the crooked line of a question mark.

Griet ended her address with the words: "You guys shouldn't think that we're a brick short here," and with that she knocked on her forehead a few times with her red painted finger. The finger left a red period underneath the crooked line, so that the question mark was now complete.

"Yes, we're against," said Abraham, confirming his wife solemnly.

At that moment Van Vuren took over. "Well, we're off," he said. "You people are all baptized, right?"

"Yes," answered Abraham, with justified pride. "We sure are."

"You all have the sign of the covenant on your forehead. Now, promise me, Mrs. Kuit, that you will look at yourself carefully in the mirror tonight, and if you see something on your forehead, think about that covenant sign and about Jacobusje and Brammetje."

The couple looked at Van Vuren in amazement. Well, maybe they didn't even understand him. In any case, they never sent their children.

Fantastic objections

We made several other visits. We had to listen to the most fantastic objections. How clever people become when they want to oppose something.

I will only mention the visits



Rev. Anthony De Jager (alias Arie Dof)

to Van Hoeven and Lenterman.

Van Hoeven orated with force that the church came first, and after that the Christian school. We could agree with him up to a point. But Van Hoeven continued, "That's why I'm against the Christian school here and now. This is far too early. We should first pay off our church and pay all the quotas before we start a school."

At that point Van Vuren spoke up, and it was amazing how quickly the discussion ended: "So you first want the church to be debt free. I think that will take 90 years if all members contributed to the church as you do, Van Hoeven."

Lenterman eagerly admitted that the Christian school was good and necessary, but it was impossible for him to pay the \$200 school fee, and no way was he going to live off charity. This year he had to buy five more cows, then next year he could provide for his family, and then, of course, the children would go to the school.

Van Vuren calmly said, "Jesus said, 'Let the children come to me and do not hinder them,' but you are hindering them with a cow, Lenterman. You are placing a cow between Jesus and your boys."

Today, the three sons of Lenterman enjoy, with much fruit, the education offered by the Christian school.

Arie

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If you are a parent or a person who is challenged, call us for information as to how we can be of assistance to you.

We at Friendship Groups Canada extend very special congratulations to *Christian Courier* for their 50 years of publication and excellence. God Bless!

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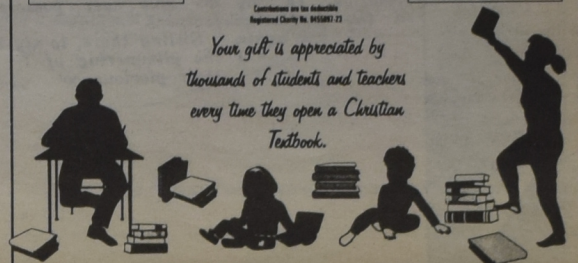
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Former contributor still encountering, learning from CC

A Mother's Thanksgiving

Our Government may have set a date for the Nation's Thanksgiving; I already had my private hour of thanksgiving.

After I put the last vacuum-sealed jar of vegetables on the shelf in my cellar, I let my hand run caressingly over the jars properly



formation. In my we will ever possess a home
ed this formation freezer!
... again Sitting there, to my rin'
I the glimmering of fi
their glorious col'



Grace Meetsma

It is hard for us to pinpoint the date we first subscribed to *Calvinist Contact*. We emigrated in 1953 and soon after that signed up for *The Guardian*, the Dutch-Canadian weekly for Reformed expression in the West.

We have in our possession the issue of July 9, 1954, a memorial to the first friend we had in Canada, the "fieldman" Mr. Herman Wierenga. A tragic traffic accident had taken Herman's life and the lives of three members of the family he had served on his last assignment.

When *The Guardian* folded we welcomed *Calvinist Contact* into our home. I have no recollection of that date, but in 1958 I volunteered a meditation for the "Women's Corner" of the Thanksgiving Day issue of CC. I still remember how the children came running into the house after picking up the paper at the post office, shouting, "Mom, they printed it!"

"They" also had put a pretty picture of a housewife doing her canning beside my story, signed G.M.

A few years later CC ran an article I had written for a contest. The article appeared on the front page of the Remembrance Day issue.

In 1961, in "Letters to the Editor," I crossed swords with Rev. Bastiaan Nederlof over the then important question of Reformed women taking part in the Women's World Day of Prayer. No doubt the two of us have both softened our approach a little in the years since.

In the fall of 1986 I wrote the story of my father's life after his 100th birthday. And finally, my husband and I visited *Calvinist Contact*'s office in May 1988.

Stimulates thinking, perspective

All that is the "visible" contact we have had with the paper.

The knowledge and learning we have gleaned of its pages is hard to define. We have grown in our perspective as CC has grown and widened its approach to issues important to us. It has stimulated our thinking as we struggled with a changing and sometimes frightening world. For that we are thankful.

We may have let our subscription lapse occasionally due to financial difficulties. But we have never shared a subscription with anyone else because we liked to be able to check back. (We also used to be real pack-rats and had to burn nine years worth of volumes once, when we were moving!)

From all this you may surmise that we are going on in years. Sooner or later our obituaries may appear in the column we now so faithfully scan. May it then be said of us: "Henry, or Grace Meetsma has gone to be with the Lord."

By his grace we have been living and serving. May it also have been to his glory!

Grace Meetsma, and her husband, Henry, live and read CC in Calgary.

Ode to 25 summers with CC

Summer 1970

Berta Hosmar

"T was an afternoon like all others, the housework was done. Our daughter was napping, outside played three sons. The laundry was folded, the dishes put away, and the peace and quiet were too perfect to stay. And sure enough, a voice yelled, "Mom, I'm starving, may I have a snack?"

And two sandy arms wrapped themselves around my neck.

One of our sons had come in, his four-year-old frame was covered with mud, for he had just played a game. And as I started scrubbing him, he said with a grin, "Surprise, Mom!", and a lively worm tickled my chin! Then another son used the bathroom, and offered to tell, "Mom, our sister's awake, and boy, does she smell!" When I had changed her diapers and fixed her a snack, she pulled off the tablecloth when I turned my back. Then another son yelled at the top of his voice, "Mom, some friends climbed onto the roof of our house!" And when I went outside and told them to get down our puppy painted the bedroom rug brown.

And as I cleaned up and wiped noses, I sighed, "Is there no end?" And just then the mail came, bringing a friend.

I put up my feet to "converse" with my pal.

For a decade CC had served us quite well.

"Should young mothers take outside jobs? What should they do?"

"Should children leave for church school during the service or remain in the pew?"

I found myself nodding in agreement, or shaking my head.

I even discovered my own story, so it couldn't be all bad!

After 30 minutes of reading, I felt refreshed, ready to go,

I murmured, "Thank you, CC, I love you so!"

Summer 1995

We've just waved goodbye to daughter, son-in-law and three lively sons.

The house is a mess, they've devoured soup and buns.

I feel vaguely sad, too bad they live far away.

It would be nice if the grandsons could drop by to play!

But then I bless the silence, the summer almost gone;

with company coming and going, it's been hectic all along.

I pick up a modest little paper — the cleaning-up can wait.

It's important that CC and I keep our date.

The name *Calvinist Contact* has changed, but it still starts with Cee-Cee.

And all the Dutch has vanished, but that's fine by me.

I read some articles, and nod in agreement, or shake my head.

I even discover my own story, so it can't be all bad!

I notice changes by the editor — what does he mean to gain?

Oh well, what's done is done, sometimes editors can be a pain!

After 30 minutes of reading, I feel refreshed, ready to go,

and I murmur, "Thank you CC — after all these years —

I still love you so!"

Berta Hosmar is a periodic contributor to CC who lives in Whitby, Ont.



Christian Labour Association of Canada

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*We extend our congratulations to all the people involved in publishing *Christian Courier*, and to its subscribers and supporters, on the occasion of the paper's 50th Anniversary.*

Along with you, we strive for clarity of vision on the issues and challenges of the day. The Christian community is very much in need of that vision, whether that be in the area of journalism, labour, education, agriculture, politics, or wherever we are called to serve. In acknowledging that the Bible's message of renewal and grace has meaning for our daily lives we can offer hope to a world mired in spiritual and moral confusion.

May you and all who are engaged in this important endeavour continue to be a salting salt in Canadian society.

On behalf of the Christian Labour Association of Canada.

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If you wish a photo included, send us the original.</p> <p>d) <i>Christian Courier</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.</p> <p>e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).</p> <p>NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS</p> <p>We offer a one-year subscription for only \$25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the <i>Christian Courier</i> and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$25.00 and the couple's correct address.</p> <p>Christian Courier 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313</p>	<div></div> <p>BOOT: William and Marianne Boot (nee Mattina). God has blessed us with a precious son</p> <p>CHRISTOPHER JOHN</p> <p>A grandson for John and Co Boot of Scotland, Ont., and Camela Mattina of Hamilton, Ont. Great-grandson for Marianne Mattina and Gasper and Concettina Campanella. Address: 231 Concession 13, Scotland, ON N0R 1R0</p> <p>FENNEMA: With gratitude in our hearts we, Chuck and Netty Fennema, want to thank the Lord for His blessing on us with the safe arrival of our four grandchildren.</p> <p>Twins JOEL THEODORE and AARON THEODORE born, June 27, 1995, St. Johns, Nfld. sons of Jennifer and Ray Fennema and brothers to Rachel Marie.</p> <p>ALEXANDRA LENNEKE born June 30, 1995, Edmonton, Alta. daughter of Shirley and Gerald Velsink and sister to Bradley James.</p> <p>CAMERON JAMES born Aug. 4, 1995, Edmonton, Alta. son of Irene and Norm Fennema and brother to Kara Dien.</p> <p>Our new address as of Sept. 1 is: 11339-66 St., Edmonton, AB T5B 1H5</p>	<div></div> <p>Heemstede the Neth. 1945</p> <p>October 21</p> <p>GABE and AFINA FÉLICIE RIENKS-VAN THIEL</p> <p>Saturday, Oct. 21, 1995, we hope to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary and the 50th year of Gabe's ordination as minister of the Gospel. We thank God for his many blessings! It also gives us the opportunity to thank our family and friends for all their love and encouragement along the road. Share our joy and gratitude Saturday, Oct. 21, 1995, in the Sherwood Restaurant, 799 Colborne E (Hwy. 2), Brantford, Ont., from 3-5 p.m., and 7-10 p.m. Friends from outside the city are heartily invited to have supper with us at 5:30 p.m. in the restaurant. (Please, phone 519-751-7413 or 519-752-9451, so we can make reservations.)</p> <p>Our family: Eugène Rienks & Grace (nee Brink) — Rebecca, Barry (Edmonton) Spoukje & Max Günther — Ramses, Radboud (Amsterdam, the Neth.) Pier Rienks & Ada (nee Breedijk) — Tammy, David, Phyllis (Carmacks, Yukon) Marti & Aris Dreijer — Kevin, Jacquie, Gabe, Adam (Brantford) Our home address is: 32 Tutela Heights Rd., Brantford, ON N3T 1A1 <i>Bring a memory. Your presence will be the most precious gift.</i></p>	<p>50th anniversary October 22, 1995</p> <p>MARTEN and WIEKE HEIDINGA (STEINSTR)</p> <p>Our great God of Psalm 121 has indeed watched over and blessed our parents. We rejoice and praise God with them. With all our love, Dick & Anita Maat Jim & Coby Heidinga John & Kay Heidinga Henry & Melinda Heidinga 12 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Address: Camelot Bldg, 56 Tripp Blvd., Unit 302, Trenton, ON K8V 5V1</p> <p>Oct. 29, 1955 - Oct. 29, 1995 "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord" (Ps.27:14). We are thankful and joyful to the Lord for His faithfulness to our parents and grandparents</p> <p>CLARENCE and TRUDY SNYDER (nee ENGELAGE)</p> <p>Happy 40th anniversary Dad and Mom, and may God bless you for all you have done for us! We love you! From: Jake & Rita Snyder — Woodville, Ont. Christina, Joanne, Clarence, Renee, Philip John & Cynthia Zwaagstra — Kelowna, B.C. Brenda, Kevin, Michael, Jessica Robert & Elizabeth Woudsma — Kingston, Ont. Jason, Kelly Gelf & Hilda VanderGaast — Port Perry, Ont. Nicole, Justin, Tyler, Benjamin Janie (in the arms of Jesus) Friends and family are invited to celebrate at an open house on Saturday, Oct. 28, 1995, from 1-3 p.m., at Lindsay Chr. Ref. Church, 206 Angeline St., Lindsay, Ont. Home address: R.R. #1, Cameron, ON K0M 1G0</p> <p>1955 October 7 1995 "O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever" (Ps.107:1). With praise and thankfulness to our Lord, we wish to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>KEES and BEP VANOOSTEROM (VANVLIT)</p> <p>May God continue to bless and keep you both. Love from: Joanne — Richmond Hill, Ont. Rick & Janiece — Samia, Ont. Shannon, Jordon Carolyn — Samia, Ont. Open house will be held Saturday, Oct. 14, 1995, from 2-4 p.m., at Second Chr. Ref. Church, Samia, Ont. Best wishes only. Home address: 1244 Isabella St., Samia, ON N7S 1S6</p>	
<p>Marriages</p> <p>ARCHER/BERGSMAS: With joy and thanks to God, Mr. and Mrs. Richard and Joan Archer and Mr. and Mrs. Douglas and Joyce Bergsma are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their children</p> <p>JENNIFER LEIGH and JAMES DOUGLAS</p> <p>The wedding will take place, D.V., Saturday, Oct. 14, 1995, at 2:30 p.m., at Wesley United Church in Brantford, Ont. Love and happiness in the future from your parents and family.</p>	<p>Anniversaries</p> <p>Zwolle Brampton 1950 1995 On Oct. 12, 1995, the Lord willing, we will celebrate with our parents and grandparents their 45th wedding anniversary.</p> <p>EVERT and TINE DE RUITER (nee DE VRIES) Thank you God, for letting Mom and Dad, Opa and Oma meet and for clearly letting us see how You have designed that for their, our, and Your good. Tom & Debbie — Pembroke Michael, Joanna, David, Lindsay, Laura Jennifer — Chatham Brian & Janet — Brampton Tine, Eric, Michelle Home address: 34 Allendale Rd., Brampton, ON L6W 2Y8</p>	<p>Anniversaries</p> <p>Hamilton, Ont. Dunnville, Ont. 1955 October 14 1995 Wedding text: "He blesses the home of the righteous" (Prov.3:33b). We thank and praise God that we can celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>PETER and HENNY STRUYK (nee MIDDEL) May God continue to bless and keep you both. Love and congratulations: Arthur & Laurie Struyk — Dunnville, Ont. Daniel, Heather Harold & Dorothy Struyk — Rockwood, Ont. Andrew, David, Elaine, Steven Paul & Evelyn Schwanz — Dunnville, Ont. Philip, Jennifer All welcome to join us at an open house on Oct. 21, 1995, from 2-4 p.m., Dunnville Chr. School, Robinson Rd., Dunnville, Ont. Address: Marshall Rd., R.R.#9, Dunnville, ON N1A 2W8</p>	<p>Anniversaries</p> <div></div> <p>Belleville Dunnville 1955 October 21 1995 "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Ps. 119:105). With great joy and thankfulness to God we celebrate, D.V., the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>RON and JEAN POSTMA (nee HAMSTRA) Congratulations Dad and Mom, Grandpa and Grandmal Shirley & Simon Stephanie, Nathaniel, Matthew Sylvia Judy & Bill Ted Open house will be held Saturday, Oct. 21, 1995, from 2-4 p.m., at Bethel Chr. Ref. Church, Robinson Rd., just off Hwy. #3, Dunnville, Ont. Best wishes only. Home address: R.R. 5, Dunnville, ON N1A 2W4</p>	

OCTOBER 6, 1995

Classifieds

Anniversaries	Obituaries	Teachers	Events	Events
<p>1955 October 8 1995 It is with great joy and thanksgiving to the God who gave us all so many blessings, that we will celebrate the 40 years of marriage of our parents and our Opa and Oma</p> <p>COR and JESSIE JANSEN VAN DOORN (nee LISE)</p> <p>Lots of love and congratulations from:</p> <p>Neil & Jenny Jansen Van Doorn — South Junction, Man. Michael, Jessica, Chris, Julianne Jane & Gijs Vander Velden — Drayton, Ont. Katrina, Jasper, Matthew Marvin & Carolyn Jansen Van Doorn — Langley, B.C. Joshua, Dayna, Kara, Daniel, Micah Steve & Marilyn Jansen Van Doorn — Walkerton, Ont. Shane, Tyler, Dylan Hank & Liz Jansen Van Doorn — Orangeville, Ont. Darryl, Jaslyn, Mandy, Leah, Eli, Jenna</p> <p>Open house on Saturday, Oct. 7, 1995, from 2-4 p.m., Listowel Chr. Ref. Church, Listowel, Ont. Address: 540 Briarwood Ave., Listowel, ON N4W 3R1, (519) 291-5493</p>	<p>While visiting his children in Lacombe, Alta., the Lord took home His child, our husband, father, father-in-law, stepfather and grandfather</p> <p>JOHN DEJONG on Sept. 9, 1995. Born Oct. 22, 1928, in Makkinga, Friesland, the Neth. He immigrated to Canada in 1947 with his parents and siblings. In 1952 he married Ytje Hoekstra, who passed away in 1980. John married again in June 1981 to Diane Wybenga (nee Kim). He is missed by his children: Margaret & Laselles Newman and three children — England Grace & George Stolte and seven children — Lacombe, Alta. Minnie & Richard Tyssen — Toronto, Ont. Jane & Herman Kapteyn and four children — Cobourg, Ont. Shirley & Albert Talsma and three children — Bentley, Alta. Robert & Minke DeJong and three children — Cobourg, Ont. Monda & Hans Eggink and three children — Lacombe, Alta. Janice & Ed Bajema and four children — Lacombe, Alta. Edith & Pete Attema and four children — Lacombe, Alta. Tracey & Shawn Prins and one child — Lacombe, Alta.</p> <p>Stepchildren: Fred & Jane Wybenga and two children — Newcastle, Ont. Joanne & Brad Almond and two children — Bowmanville, Ont. Cathy & Gerald DenOuden and three children — Redcliff, Alta. Edna & Murray Gibson and two children — Cobourg, Ont.</p>	<p>HOLLAND MARSH: We need a teacher for Grade 1, starting December 1995. Interested? Do you love the Lord? Children? Please apply to:</p> <p>Henry Lise, Principal Holland Marsh Distr. Christian School 18955 Dufferin St., R.R.#2 Newmarket, ON L3Y 4V9 Tel.: (905) 775-3701 or fax: (905) 775-2395</p>	<p>RETIREMENT Come celebrate with us.</p> <p>"Speaking From Experience" An evening honoring the career of Mary VanderVennen with Christian Counselling Services.</p> <p>Friday, November 10, 1995 BloorSt. United Church Hall 800 Bloor St. W., Toronto, Ont.</p> <p>Reception from 6:45, Programme at 8:00 Tickets \$15, proceeds to fund annual lecture Call (416) 489-8350</p>	<p>DOMINICAN REPUBLIC</p> <p>The Bible League presents A MISSION TOUR</p> <p>The Dominican Republic: January 15-22, 1996 Cost: \$959.00 p.p., plus Dep. Tax, Ex. Toronto, Dbl. Occ.</p> <p>VISIT — with your Missionaries — Mission Projects SEE — Bible Distribution ENJOY — Christian Fellowship</p> <p>Second week stay optional — upon request.</p> <p>Personally escorted by: Rev. John G. Klomps, Executive Director, TBL</p> <p>For complete information and reservations, please call or write: The Bible League, P.O. Box 5037, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8 Telephone: (905) 319-9500 or 1-800-363-WORD</p>
<p>Obituaries</p> <p>"There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away" (Rev.21:4b).</p> <p>Oct. 3, 1933 - Sept. 16, 1995 ANDREW WASSENAAR Loving husband of Emmy Wassenaar. Dear father of: Len & Marg Wassenaar — Osler, Sask. Suzanne & Scott Westman — Cam-lachie, Ont. Yolande & Javeed Akhtar — Fuji City, Japan Opa of Andrew, Daniel and Nadine Wassenaar. Andy taught high school in Samia, Ont., for 27 years. After his retirement in 1989, Andy and Emmy built a home on Redstone Lake in the Haliburton Highlands. Winters were spent with their children, travelling, and doing volunteer work for the CRWRC, the Seafarers, and other Christian organizations. Having suffered numerous health problems in recent years, Andy went to be with his Lord and Savior. Andy was much loved and will be missed by all who knew him. The funeral service was held at Cephas Chr. Ref. Church in Peterborough, Ont., on Sept. 19, 1995. Correspondence address: General Delivery, Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0</p>	<p>Aalten Trenton On Sept. 12, 1995, after a brave struggle of failing health, the Lord took to Himself His child</p> <p>ANN WIGGERS (SIKKING) at the age of 80 years. "But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am sure that He is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me" (2 Tim. 1:12). She was predeceased by her husband John H. Wiggers. Dear Mom of: Riki & Fred Westrik — Guelph George & Sarah Wiggers — Newmarket Dianne & Henk TeBrake — Trenton Wilma & Albert Vos — Fergus Audrey & Hessel VanderVelde — Renfrew Pamela Dizon — Richmond Hill Loving grandmother of 18 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild. Correspondence address: Dianne and Henk TeBrake, R.R.#3, Trenton, ON K8V 5P6</p>	<p>Personal</p> <p>ONE TO ANOTHER Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5. Write to: #302, 1502-2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 4A2</p>	<p>Personal</p> <p>Born-again Christian, professional businessman, long term member of CRC family, never married, non-smoker, with biblical family values (attractive brown skin, Canadian), seeking female friend with similar beliefs and values to spend quality time with (some Dutch knowledge is preferred as I'm planning to travel to Holland) under age 30. Please write to: Tony, 7030 Copenhagen Rd., Unit #57, Mississauga, ON L5N 2P3; Tel. (905) 812-1238. I send replies to all. If you haven't received one, please call me collect.</p>	<p>Shalom Manor</p> <p>A Christian Long Term Care Facility 12 Bartlett Avenue, Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5 Telephone (905) 945-9631 Fax (905) 945-1211</p>
			<p>Thank you for the good service you provide.</p> <p>May God bless you in the next half century!</p> <p>Congratulations!</p>	

Classifieds

For Sale	Events	Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous
<p>Let Jesus light up your life! Jesus night light now available! Order yours today! Send payment of \$8.50, plus \$1.50 for shipping to: L. & J. LAWSON R.R. #2 TAVISTOCK, ON N0B 2R0</p>	<p>ISRAEL</p> <p>The Bible League invites you to join its</p> <p>BIBLE LAND TOUR</p> <p>12 exciting days: February 19 — March 1, 1996 Cost: \$2,349.00 p.p., ex. Toronto, dbl. occ., plus Dep. Tax.</p> <p>VISIT Jerusalem — Bethlehem — Nazareth — Masada and many other places.</p> <p>Free stop-over in Amsterdam Personally escorted by: Rev. John G. Klomps Executive Director, TBL</p> <p>For complete information and reservations please call or write: Rev. John G. Klomps The Bible League P.O. Box 5037, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8 (905) 319-9500 or 1-800-363-WORD</p>		<p>Puzzled about the Call to Ministry?</p> <p>"The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."</p> <p>Frederick Buechner</p> <p>Spend one day exploring your sense of call with persons like you. You will explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to understand the call of God • How to prepare yourself effectively • How to discern your life map • How to balance the needs of family • How to deal with practical dimensions • How to fulfill your sense of call <p>Saturday October 21, 1995 8:00 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.</p> <p>Ancaster Christian Reformed Church, Ancaster, Ontario (905) 648-2323</p> <p>(Sponsored by Calvin Theological Seminary and Ancaster Christian Reformed Church)</p>	
<p>Childcare available</p>				
<p>Childcare available. Certified childcare worker with first aid and CPR will provide meals, crafts, stories, songs, trips to park and library. It's conveniently located in central Hamilton, Ont. Call Anne (905) 572-9557</p>				
<p>Personal</p>				
<p>How to Write Your Memoirs (or how to talk your parents into writing theirs). Booklet with interviewing, writing, and publishing information. Forms and resources list. Send \$7.95 to FMP, 44 South Dr., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4V2.</p>	<p>DORDT COLLEGE</p> <p>Faculty Positions</p> <p>Dordt College is seeking Christian academicians for openings beginning August 1996 in the following areas:</p> <p>Business Administration: management and marketing or other areas. Economics: introductory and upper level courses. Health, Physical Education, Recreation: exercise science, health, coaching theory, women's volleyball. Psychology: (possible openings) introductory and upper level courses. Theology: (Possible opening) introductory and upper level courses.</p> <p>Qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a letter of interest and curriculum vitae to Dr. Rockne McCarthy; Dordt College, 498 Fourth Avenue NE, Sioux Centre IA 51250-1697; Phone: 712-722-6333; fax: 712-722-4496; e-mail: vpaa@dordt.edu</p> <p><i>Dordt College is an equal opportunity institution and encourages the nominations and candidacies of women and minorities.</i></p> <p>DORDT COLLEGE</p>			
<p>For Sale</p>				
<p>personalized DUTCH DELFT BLUE style wall plaques</p> <p></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • birth • graduation • Dutch roots story • wedding (anniversary) • immigrant ships <p>ask for catalogue publishers of the Windmill your Dutch-English bi-weekly P.O. Box 313, Lynden, WA 98264 P.O. Bag 9033, Surrey, BC V3T 4X3 (604) 532-1733 fax (604) 532-1734</p>	<p>KLM-special Oct. 1 - Dec. 14, 1995 \$599 + \$60 taxes</p> <p>Prompt, expert, reliable service. Please call Irma VandenDool (905) 562-3410 Travel consultant for BRINKMAN TRAVEL ST. CATHARINES</p>		<p>THE NETHERLANDS BAZAAR</p> <p>SAT. OCT. 14, 1995 10 AM - 10 PM 7755 BAYVIEW AVE. THORNHILL COMMUNITY CENTRE (corner of Bayview Ave. and John St.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flowers and Plants • "White Elephants" • Gifts and Books • Handicrafts • Kiddies Corner • Live Music • Auction • Groceries • Bake Sale • Herring • Croquettes • Pea Soup and other Dutch Treats <p>FINANCIAL DONATIONS CAN BE SENT TO: COMMITTEE NETHERLANDS BAZAAR, 15 FAVILLON UNIONVILLE, L3R 1N8</p> <p>MARKET PLACE: 10AM-6PM RESTAURANT: 10AM-9PM AUCTION: 7PM QUESTIONS? PLEASE CALL: LENIE GENRELS: (416) 225-5217 BETS SPEELMAN: (416) 742-1172 GE SPAANS: (905) 477-1243 IF YOUR SPECIALTY IS MAKING DUTCH PEASOUP OR BAKING, WE NEED YOU. ADMISSION FREE</p>	

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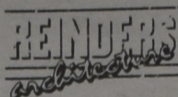
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Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

Oct. 7 Concert by Burlington's "Pro Musica Choir" (Ian Sadler, dir.), 8 p.m., Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Ont.

* Oct. 7 Christian Courier celebrates 50 years of Reformed Christian journalism at a reception, starting at 8 p.m., at the Crossroads Centre atrium, QEWS at 403, Burlington, Ont. Please RSVP by Sept. 29. Phone: (905) 682-8311.

Oct. 14 CPJ conferences: "Alternatives, Voices of Hope in a Climate of Despair" in Edmonton, Alta., and "Mapping Ontario's Political Future" in Toronto, Ont. Info.: 1-800-667-8046.



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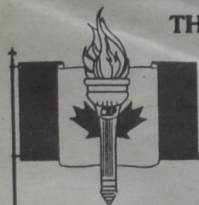
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"The Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Implications for Our Society" by Gerald Gauy from the Canadian Centre of Justice, Ottawa, Ont.

"Planned Parenthood and Government Funding" by Patricia Bainbridge, Executive Director of Life Decisions International. And other timely topics.

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